

FOREIGNERS IN ANCIENT INDIA  
AND LAKSHMI AND SARAS-  
WATHI IN ART AND LITERA-  
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D. C. SIRCAR

CENTRE OF ADVANCED STUDY IN  
ANCIENT INDIAN HISTORY AND CULTURE  
UNIVERSITY OF CALCUTTA

LECTURES AND SEMINARS  
No. V-B (SEMINARS)



# FOREIGNERS IN ANCIENT INDIA AND LAKSMI AND SARASVATI IN ART AND LITERATURE

*Edited by*

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## PREFACE

We are glad to place in the hands of historians the proceedings of the fifth series of inter-university seminars, held at the Centre of Advanced Study in Ancient Indian History and Culture, Calcutta University, on the 21st and 22nd February, 1969. The subjects of the two days' seminars were— (1) Foreigners in Ancient India, and (2) Lakṣmī and Sarasvatī in Art and Literature.

As usual, the articles available for publication have been published without much substantial change. The number of papers on Lakṣmī and Sarasvatī, received for the Second Day's Seminar, would suggest that more people are interested in the Goddess of Prosperity than in the Goddess of Learning.

The proceedings have been drawn up on the basis of the report submitted by Sri R. K. Billorey, the other reporters having failed to submit their notes. It is a matter of satisfaction to me that Sri Billorey has done the job efficiently, and I am extremely thankful to him. The index of the volume has been prepared by Dr. Sm. K. Saha and Dr. S. P. Singh to whom also my sincere thanks are due.

Centre of Advanced Study in  
AIHC, Calcutta University,  
51/2, Hazra Road, Calcutta-19,  
January 5, 1970.

D. C. SIRCAR  
*Director*



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**PART I**

**FOREIGNERS IN ANCIENT INDIA**





# Proceedings of the Seminar

## First Day

*Date :* 21st February, 1969.

*Time :* 10-30 A.M. to 1 P.M., and  
3 P.M. to 5 P.M.

*Subject :* Foreigners in Ancient India.

*Place :* Lecture Hall at the Department of  
Ancient Indian History and Culture,  
Calcutta University, 51/2, Hazra Road,  
Calcutta-19.

*Chairman :* DR. D. C. SIRCAR, Carmichael Professor  
and Head of the Department of AIHC,  
and Director of the Centre of Advanced  
Study in AIHC, Calcutta University.

### Participants besides the Chairman :

- |     |                       |   |
|-----|-----------------------|---|
| 1.  | DR. L. K. TRIPATHI    | Banaras Hindu University,<br>Varanasi                     |
| 2.  | DR. K. SUNDARAM       | Andhra University, Waltair                                |
| 3.  | DR. SM. B. Lahiri     | Jadavpur University                                       |
| 4.  | DR. B. P. MAJUMDAR    | Patna University  |
| 5.  | SRI C. D. CHATTERJEE  | Lucknow   |
| 6.  | SRI D. MUKHERJEE      | Calcutta University                                       |
| 7.  | DR. A. N. LAHIRI      | Do.   |
| 8.  | SRI T. N. CHAKRABORTY | Do.   |
| 9.  | DR. K. K. DASGUPTA    | Do.   |
| 10. | DR. S. BANDYOPADHYAY  | Centre of Advanced Study in<br>AIHC, Calcutta University  |
| 11. | DR. D. R. Das         | Do.   |
| 12. | DR. A. K. CHATTERJEE  | Do.   |
| 13. | SRI J. R. HALDAR      | Do.   |
| 14. | SRI R. K. PRAMANIK    | Student of the Department of<br>AIHC, Calcutta University |
| 15. | SRI R. K. BILLOREY    | Do.   |
| 16. | SRI C. L. CHAKRABARTI | Dinabandhu College, Bangaon,<br>24 Parg. Dist., W.B.      |
| 17. | SM. M. MUKHOPADHYAY   | Beltala Girls' School, Calcutta<br>and others.            |

*Reporters :* SRI R. K. BILLOREY and others.

## Morning Session

The session began at 10-30 A.M., and Prof. D. C. Sircar welcomed the scholars assembled, with particular reference to the representatives of various universities. He observed that invitation had been extended to the following seventeen universities requesting them to send their representatives to participate in the seminars—(1) Allahabad, (2) Andhra, (3) Annamalai, (4) Banaras, (5) Bombay, (6) Burdwan, (7) Jadavpur, (8) Jodhpur, (9) Karnatak, (10) Kerala, (11) Lucknow, (12) Magadh, (13) Patna, (14) Poona, (15) Saugor, (16) Utkal, and (17) Visva-Bharati. Of these, only 11 universities named their representatives—(1) Allahabad (Dr. V. C. Srivastava), (2) Andhra (Dr. K. Sundaram), (3) Annamalai (Dr. B. V. Ramanujam), (4) Banaras (Prof. A. K. Narain, and Dr. L. K. Tripathi in place of Dr. Vidya Prakash, deceased), (5) Bombay (Dr. L. B. Keny), (6) Burdwan (Dr. B. Chatterjee), (7) Jadavpur (Dr. Sm. B. Lahiri and Dr. S. K. Maity), (8) Lucknow (Dr. K. K. Thaplyal), (9) Magadh (Dr. U. Thakur), (10) Poona (Dr. M. K. Dhavalikar), and (11) Saugor (Prof. K. D. Bajpai). Out of the said scholars who were specially invited by the Centre, Dr. Sundaram, Dr. Tripathi and Dr. Sm. Lahiri actually came to attend the seminars, and to them the Centre was extremely thankful. Prof. Sircar expressed his gratefulness to the representatives of a few other universities who had sent their papers for the seminars, but were unable to attend them, and also to the few scholars who attended the seminars in their personal capacity and not as representatives of their institutions. He thanked Sri K. S. Behera who expected the approval of the Utkal University to represent it and sent a paper for the seminars.

Altogether eleven papers had been contributed to this day's seminar, the authors of seven of which were present. Dr. A. N. Lahiri was first invited to read his paper entitled

‘Influence of the Coins of Foreign Rulers on Indigenous Issues’.

Prof. D. C. Sircar initiated the discussion on Dr. Lahiri's paper by pointing out that more has been said in it on the Indianisation of foreign coins than on the foreign influence on early Indian coinage which is the subject indicated by the title of the paper. He also observed that the influence was from both sides, i.e. of foreign on Indian coinage and of Indian on foreign coinage. Dr. S. Bandyopadhyay also regarded the influence as reciprocal. Dr. Lahiri said that the foreigner adopted the Indian 20-*rati* standard, though it has not been proved that this standard was really followed in India. Prof. D. C. Sircar did not accept the latter view. Dr. Bandyopadhyay pointed out that the extant specimens of coins generally suffered from wear and tear, so that it is difficult to hazard a definite opinion on the subject. Prof. Sircar and Dr. Tripathi agreed with this view. Dr. Bandyopadhyay then pointed out that Dr. Lahiri had mentioned only the gold and silver issues of the Guptas, but not their brass and copper coins and that the brass coins of the late Kuṣāṇa king named Basana or Pasana appear to have influenced the brass coinage of Candragupta II noticed by C. D. Chatterjee in *JUPHS*, N. S., Vol. I, No. 2. Dr. Lahiri observed that the Gupta brass coins are few and the foreign influence on them seems to be negligible. Prof. Sircar, however, felt that the evidence of these coins should be taken note of.

Dr. K. Sundaram read his paper entitled ‘Fa-hien—a Perspective’, in which, *inter alia*, he suggested that the Indians mainly developed the sea-route to China, while the Chinese primarily developed the land-route to India. Prof. D. C. Sircar commented on Dr. Sundaram's statement that Mathurā was the capital of Kaṇiṣka's empire; he said that Kaṇiṣka is represented as the king of

Gandhāra of which the capital was Puruṣapura (Peshawar) while Mathurā was probably the centre of an important administrative division or of religious and commercial activity. Dr. S. Bandyopadhyay referred to Dr. Sundaram's views regarding Kaṇiṣka's responsibility for the spread of Buddhism to the frontiers of China and said that royal patronage was not required for the spread of religious faith. Prof. Sircar also observed that a religion could be propagated by the monks. He further pointed out that Kaṇiṣka's coins bear the figures of numerous divinities which are mostly Greek and West Asian, so that he may not have been a staunch Buddhist at all. Sri D. Mukherjee agreed with this view. Dr. Bandyopadhyay drew attention to Kumāralāta's *Kalpanāmaṇḍitīkā* (composed about the second century A.D. and translated into Chinese by Kumārajīva about 405 A.D.) which mentions Kaṇiṣka and deals with Buddhism.

Dr. D. R. Das next read a note entitled 'Foreign Influence on a Bishnupur Terracotta Panel'. It is from the Jorbāṅglā temple and deals with a motif representing tigers persuing a fleeing deer on which Dr. Das traced Perso-Mughul or European influence. The photograph exhibited 'by Dr. Das not being quite clear, the identification of the motif was doubted by some and Sri D. Mukherjee said that any suggestion may be offered on the basis of an indistinct photograph ; but Dr. Das said that there could not be any doubt about it. As regards Dr. Das's statement that he has not noticed the motif elsewhere, Dr. Tripathi observed that similar motifs occur on a Gupta pillar at Ajanta and in Early Cālukyan art. Dr. S. Bandyopadhyay and Dr. A. N. Lahiri doubted whether the paper suited the subject of the seminar, since Dr. Das's material is late medieval on which Mughul or European influence has been traced. But Prof. Sircar pointed out the possibility of making such topics relevant by posing the

question whether a late art motif or socio-religious custom can be traced in earlier sources.

The morning session ended with the lunch interval at 1 P. M.

### Afternoon Session

After the resumption of the session in the afternoon, Dr. S. Bandyopadhyay read his paper on 'Foreign Official Designations in Early Indian Records'. In this connection, Prof. Sircar remembered his note on *Śarabhaṅga* = *Sarabhaṅga* = *Sarobhaṅga* (i. e. Persian *Sarhang*) appearing some years back in the *Epigraphia Indica*, in which reference was made to other essentially foreign official designations like *Gaṇjavara*, *Pilūpati*, *Dibira*, etc. Dr. K. Sundaram wanted to know how foreign influence could be traced in ancient Indian administration. Dr. Bandyopadhyay pointed out that foreign invaders played a significant part in ancient Indian politics, so that it was possible for the administration of the country to have been influenced by them. Prof. Sircar, Dr. Tripathi and Sri D. Mukherjee supported this view.

Next Sri C. D. Chatterjee read his paper on 'The Yonas and the Yonaloka' in which he dealt with the mention of the Yavana country in Indian literature, especially in Pali works. As regards the *Majjhimanikāya* reference to the Yona-Kamboja people in the age of the Buddha, as mentioned by Sri Chatterjee, Dr. Sundaram wanted to know how it was possible for the Buddha (c. 544-486 B.C.) to have known anything about the Yavanas and Kambojas. Sri Chatterjee replied that Indian merchants, who had commercial intercourse with the ports of the Persian Gulf since prehistoric times, brought information about the foreigners and their lands. He referred to Indian trade with Bāveru or Babylon and to the discovery of Indian textile in Western Asia. Prof. Sircar, however,

regarded the *Majjhimanikāya* reference as anachronical, because the work was composed, in his opinion, long after the Buddha, when the Yavana and Kamboja settlements in the Uttarāpatha division of ancient Kumāridvīpa (Bhāratavarṣa) were well known. He further pointed out that Sri Chatterjee mentioned Yonaka = Yavana in a geographical sense, though the name is also applied to a people. Sri Chatterjee observed that Yonaka as the name of a people is well known, but that his paper was emphasising the geographical sense of Yonaka. Some other questions were put to Sri Chatterjee who felt, however, that they were not quite relevant to his paper.

Prof. D. C. Sircar then read his paper entitled 'Aśoka's Edicts for the Yavanas and Kambojas', in which he dealt with the recently discovered Kandahar Edicts in Greek and Aramaic and offered, for the first time, an English translation of the condensed Greek version of Edicts XII and XIII, which lacks the early part of the former and the concluding section of the latter, on the basis of their French translation appearing in the *Journal Asiatique*, 1964. The existence of these Greek and Aramaic inscriptions at Kandahar (ancient 'Alexandria among the Arachosians'), Prof. Sircar pointed out, shows that the Yavana and Kamboja population in Aśoka's empire had its greatest concentration in the Kandahar region. He further observed that the reference to the conquest of Kaliṅga in the Kandahar version of Rock Edict XIII is interesting in view of the fact that it is found in Aśokan records discovered outside Kaliṅga (the Orissa region) where the king did not like to admit his remorse after the Kaliṅga war.

Sri C. D. Chatterjee remarked that Prof. Sircar did not mention in this connection the fact that he had occasion to translate the Greek and Aramaic versions of a Minor Rock Edict from Kandahar in Aśokan Prakrit of the Shahbazgarhi-Mansehra type so skillfully that the translation reads like an

original Aśokan record. Sri T. N. Chakraborty wanted to know where the Aramaic versions of Aśokan Edicts have been found, and Sri C. D. Chatterjee replied that they have been discovered even in Taxila. Dr. S. Bandyopadhyay remarked that the Kandahar Edicts must have been translated from Prakrit for the Yavana and Kamboja subjects of Aśoka. Prof. Sircar said that Aśoka may have dictated the Prakrit text to some officers, but that the Greek and Aramaic versions may have been prepared by some Yavana and Kamboja officers of Aśoka with the help of Prakrit-knowing officials. Dr. A. N. Lahiri wanted to know whether Aśoka visited Kandahar, and Prof. Sircar replied that we have as yet no evidence to prove Aśoka's visit to the area. As regards the spread of Buddhism in Western Asia, Prof. Sircar observed that Aśoka was certainly a Buddhist and appears to have sent Buddhist missionaries to that region. Buddhist monks may have also travelled to the said area of their own accord for the propagation of their religion. Dr. L. K. Tripathi wanted to know why there is no reference to Aśoka in the Classical works. Prof. Sircar said that the reason is unknown ; but it may be due to the absence of any West Asian ambassador at Aśoka's court. Sri C. D. Chatterjee remarked that Yonaka Dhammarakkhita was a Greek ambassador or member of the embassy, who became a Buddhist, while Sri D. Mukherjee pointed out that there was another Greek monk named Yonaka. Regarding the conquest of Kalinga, Sri C. D. Chatterjee doubted Aśoka's claims, because, in his opinion, Kalinga formed a part of Candragupta Maurya's empire. On this, Sri L. K. Pramanik and Sri R. K. Billorey wanted to know whether there was evidence regarding diminution of the Maurya empire during Bindusāra's reign. Prof. Sircar said that there was no definite evidence on that point. He further observed that Kalinga was a part of the Nanda empire and must have rebelled against the Mauryas so that Aśoka had to conquer it.



The last paper on the subject was read by Sri C. L. Chakrabarti, his topic being 'Some Foreign Settlements in Uttarāpatha', in which reference was made to the various cities founded by Alexander the Great in Afghanistan and West Pakistan, usually under the name of Alexandria, and some others founded by other foreigners like the Indo-Greeks, Indo-Scythians, Kuṣāṇas and Hūṇas, such as Dattāmitrī (after Demetrius), Minnagara, Huṣkapura (after Huviṣka), Juṣkapura (after Vajheṣka or Vāsiṣka), Kaṇiṣkapura (after Kaṇiṣka), Mihirapura (after Mihirakula), etc.

Prof. D. C. Sircar observed that there may be a few omissions in Sri Chakrabarti's list of cities founded by foreign rulers, since the *Rājataranginī* attributes the foundation of a city called Jayasvāmipura (apparently named after Jayasvāmin, a form of Viṣṇu) by the Turuṣka king Juṣka. Dr. A. N. Lahiri wanted to know whether there is any evidence for regarding the cities as foreign settlements, while Dr. D. R. Das observed that they were foreign settlements in a limited sense. Prof. Sircar said that some of the cities, especially those founded by Alexander the Great, must have been meant for garrisoning foreign troops in order to keep the districts around them under subjection ; but he admitted that some of them may have been built for the purpose of creating a trade centre or a temple town, and that these may not have had a considerable foreign garrison. However, he pointed out that in any such city or township, some foreign personnel were expected to be present since the preservation of law and order and the suppression of rebellion of the local people was the responsibility of the foreign Government. Dr. L. K. Tripathi considered it natural that the foreign rulers would found cities at strategic places for keeping control over the territories they conquered and that they would rely on their own men rather than on local recruits. Dr. S. Bandyopadhyay said that such cities were not inhabited by foreigners only. Prof. Sircar replied that most of them appear to have had a foreigners' enclave.

The day's session closed at 5 P.M.

## FOREIGNERS IN THE AJANTA PAINTINGS

M. K. Dhavalikar, Deccan College, Poona University

The Buddhist rock-cut cave temples at Ajanta (Aurangabad District, Maharashtra) constitute a glorious heritage of humanity. Belonging as they do to two different phases of architectural development, they are adorned with paintings on their wall surfaces. It seems that quite a number of caves were formerly decorated with paintings. But unfortunately much of it has perished due to the ravages of time and man, and only a few fragments of paintings of the Śātavāhana period have survived. But Caves Nos. I, II, XVI and XVII, which can be assigned to the Vākāṭaka-Gupta period,<sup>1</sup> still contain several large panels on their walls. They mostly depict the *Jātakas* and the *Avadānas*, and we find the contemporary life reflected in them. They thus constitute a valuable documentary on the culture of golden age in all its kaleidoscopic variety. We must agree with Pandit Nehru who observed that "Ajanta takes us into a distant, dreamlike, yet a very real world."<sup>2</sup>

The paintings of the Vākāṭaka-Gupta age depict, in several panels, men and women who, from their physiognomy and dress, appear to be of foreign origin. Sometimes we find them in the palace employ as royal bodyguards and chambermaids

1 Walter Spink has recently shown that all the Mahāyāna caves at Ajanta were excavated during the reign of Hariṣeṇa (c. 460-510 A.D.). See his paper 'From History to Art History : Monuments of the Deccan', *The XXVI International Congress of Orientalists, Summaries of Papers*, New Delhi, 1964, p. 243. [There is no reason to assign a reign of 50 years to Hariṣeṇa.—Ed.]

2 *Discovery of India*, Calcutta, 1944, p. 246.

or as merchants offering presents to Indian kings. They also appear as pious devotees listening, with rapt attention, to the sermon of the 'Enlightened One' or engrossed in dalliance with their companions. There should be little doubt that these foreigners were there in India during the Vākāṭaka-Gupta age, or else it would not have been possible for the master-artists of Ajanta to portray them so realistically in the paintings.

The existence of foreigners in the Ajanta paintings was first noticed by Ralph and Grisley who distinctly made out the foreigners as against the native Indians.<sup>3</sup> Since then several scholars have attempted to identify their nationality; e.g., Rajendralal Mitra<sup>4</sup> who has given us an excellent account. Fergusson propounded the theory of the exchange of embassies between India and Persia on the basis of the existence of some foreigners in the panels in Cave I.<sup>5</sup> Yazdani, in his *magnum opus* on Ajanta, has described them fairly accurately and in great detail<sup>6</sup> while Moti Chandra has studied their costumes.<sup>7</sup> However, there does not appear to be a general agreement regarding the nationality of several personalities in the paintings whereas some people have not yet received the attention of scholars. It is therefore necessary that we try to know the identity of these foreigners depicted in the paintings.

One of the most important and yet a very controversial panel is that which has been identified, though wrongly, as the 'Embassy' scene.<sup>8</sup> It is painted on the right side wall in Cave I and is presently in an extremely bad state of preservation, many of its details being lost. It depicts a king sitting on throne

3 See *JASB*, Vol. XLVII, 1878, pp. 62-72.

4 *Loc. cit.*

5 *JRAS*, 1879, pp. 155ff.

6 *Ajanta*, Pls. and Text, Pts. I-IV.

7 *Bhāratiya Veśabhūṣā*, Prayag, Sam. 2007.

8 Yazdani, *op. cit.*, Pt. I, Pl. XXXVIII.

in the Darbar Hall with all his paraphernalia, and persons, undoubtedly foreigners, are shown as offering gifts to him. The dress of the foreigners, though different in colour, is identical in form. The first person, near the king, is shown wearing a full-sleeved striped tunic with a V-shaped neck and tight trousers. He also wears a tall, pointed cap, and holds some object—probably a pearl string—in his left hand and is showing it to the king by his right hand. Near the margin of the right sleeve are seen two loosely hanging laces probably for fastening to the loose sleeve. The other person wears a similar but plain dress and also top boots into which his trousers are tucked. His cap, though similar to that of his leader, has a sort of tassel at the top. The third person behind him wears a similar costume. He is shown holding a tray containing gifts. On the extreme right, some persons belonging to the same group are seen entering through the gateway.

All the foreigners in the 'Embassy' scene look trim and wiry and have a fair complexion. They have a straight nose and a broad forehead, and some of them have a clipped beard. As the scene was taken to represent the embassy of the Sassanian king Khusrū II (590-628 A. D.), in the thirty-sixth year of his reign, to the court of the Cālukya monarch Pulakeśin II (610-42 A.D.), the people were naturally supposed to be Iranians.<sup>9</sup> Rajendralal Mitra also thought them to be Persians.<sup>10</sup> However, there now seems to be a general agreement among scholars that it does not represent the so-called embassy.<sup>11</sup> Yazdani therefore

9 V.A. Smith., *Early History of India*, 4th ed., pp. 442-43.

10 *Op. cit.*, pp. 66-68.

11 That there was no such exchange of embassies has been very convincingly shown by R.C. Majumdar, 'Pulakeśi and Khusrū II,' *JIH*, Vol. XXX, 1944, pp. 184 ff.

thought them to be of Turkish origin.<sup>12</sup> But, as they are not hefty and of ponderous proportion, it appears that they are neither Iranians nor Central Asians. Moti Chandra has pointed out the similarity between these figures and those portrayed in a first century fresco from Dura Europos and proposed that they are Syrians. But the Dura Europos frescoes are far removed from those of Ajanta in point of time, and he is therefore not certain about it.<sup>13</sup>

The panel is thus controversial and so also is the identification of the foreigners depicted in it. However, on close observation, it appears that these persons are probably Syrian merchants. The tunic and the tall conical headgear, very similar to the ones worn by the persons in the scene, have actually been found in the excavations of Dura Europos.<sup>14</sup> They have been dated to the middle of third century while the Mahāyāna caves at Ajanta, as shown by Spink, belong to the latter half of the 5th century. The time lag is therefore quite negligible. It may be noted in this connection that, although Indian trade with the Roman empire declined to a considerable extent after the third century, there is no doubt that it continued for at least two or three hundred years more. This is clearly demonstrated by the finds of Roman coins in South India. The Indians were therefore in close contact with Syrian merchants, and that is why the master artists of Ajanta portrayed them in the paintings.

Another important panel which occurs in Cave I shows a drinking scene in which all the persons, male and female, are foreigners.<sup>15</sup> The central figure, obviously a chieftain, is shown

12 *Op. cit.*, Pt. I, Text, p. 46.

13 *Op. cit.*, p. 21.

14 R. Pfister and Louisa Bellinger, *The Excavations at Dura Europos*, Vol. IV, Pt. II—*The Textiles*, New Haven, 1945, Pls. V and XXVIII.

15 Yazdani, *op. cit.*, Pt. I, Pl. XXXIX.

sitting in a cross-legged fashion on a well-stuffed *diwan* with a curved back. He wears a full-sleeved tunic of which the round neck, the arm-bands and the cuffs are decorated with embroidered patterns. It is probably fastened at the back where streamers are seen fluttering. He also wears a jewelled girdle and a domical cap which appears to be fur-brimmed. He is quite hefty, and his physical features are somewhat coarse. His nose is rather broad and the eyes hooded. He is shown with unkempt hair and beard and mustaches. He holds in his right hand a wine cup.

The chief is accompanied by his consort who is shown sitting on the *diwan* by his side. She appears to be wearing a long flowing gown which also bears embroidered patterns. In sharp contrast to her consort, her features are extremely delicate and, of all the women of foreign origin at Ajanta, she is the most beautiful. She wears a dainty tiara. At the extreme right and left are two maids holding high-necked wine flagons, who are serving wine to their master. They both wear long, embroidered skirts reaching the ground and a full-sleeved bodice. They also wear a forehead band. Though their complexion is fair, their features appear somewhat coarse.

In front of the chief are two servants who are shown sitting on the ground. They also wear full-sleeved tunics and domical headgears. They hold large plates in their hands and are serving eatables to their master. They are thick-lipped and bearded, and their snub nose and extremely dark complexion indicate their Negroid origin.

This drinking scene, or 'the Bacchanalian scene' as it is called, has been thought by Fergusson to portray the Persian king Khusrū II and his famous queen Shirin.<sup>16</sup> However, it is extremely difficult to accept this view even if it is conceded that

the cave belongs to the 6th or 7th century A. D. At best we can take it to represent some foreign chieftain with his consort and retinue. From the dress, he appears to be a Persian nobleman. His headgear is the typical Persian *khol* (Skt. *kulala*). The consort and the maids being of fair complexion can also be said to be Iranians whereas the attendants sitting on the floor are possibly Negro slaves.

A very similar panel is painted in the same cave, the only difference being that the Negroid slaves are absent in this scene.<sup>17</sup> We can therefore see the details of the costume of those who are present. The mantle or cape of the chief can be clearly seen in this picture. So also are the high boots of the master and his consort. The latter wears a full-sleeved, knee-reaching tunic while the maid on the left has put on a long flowing skirt which reaches the ground. The maid on the left, from her physiognomy, appears to be of Negroid origin. It is needless to state that the master and the consort are Iranians. Both these scenes showing an Iranian chief, drinking wine with his consort and attendants, have been taken by Mitra to represent Bactrian domestic scenes.<sup>18</sup>

In a small decorative panel in Cave II, two jovial companions are shown talking over a cup of wine.<sup>19</sup> They wear full-sleeved tunics and trousers tucked into high boots. Their broad-brimmed domical caps are adorned with tufts. Their mustaches and the long nose are especially noteworthy. There should be little doubt that they are Iranians.

In Cave XVII is depicted a palace scene (unidentified) which shows a prince and a princess drinking wine.<sup>20</sup> They

17 For a fine reproduction of this panel, see Mitra in *JASB*, Vol. XLVII, 1878, Pl. III.

18 *Ibid.*, pp. 68-72.

19 Yazdani, *op. cit.*, Pt. II, Pl. XI(a).

20 *Ibid.*, Pt. III, Pl. LXVI.



are attended upon by a palace maid who is serving wine to her master through a flagon. She is standing to the left of the royal couple. She wears a full-sleeved bodice, rather long, and resting on her hips. It is decorated with star patterns and probably has a front opening. She has donned a conical cap which is ornamented with beaded pattern along the margin and the central ridge. Her fair and delicate features show that she is probably of Iranian origin.

There are two very interesting figures in the famous panel showing Padmapāṇi in Cave I.<sup>21</sup> They are the male and female attendants of the Bodhisattva. On his left is a *cāmara-dhārīṇī* who is not seen completely as she is partially covered by Padmapāṇi and the lady who has been identified as Yaśodharā. She can at once be recognised as a foreigner because of her dress and the headgear. She wears a full-sleeved gown of blue colour which almost reaches the ground and the curious headdress consists of a tall conical cap with three upturned flaps, one in the centre and the other two on sides. The flaps are lavishly ornamented with an outsize jewel in the centre, which is fringed by smaller ones. The central vertical band is also similarly gem-studded and on the top of the headgear is a big round gem, simulating a tassel. The *cāmara-dhārīṇī* is of a very fair complexion and looks extremely charming because of her delicate features. Her aquiline nose is noteworthy for the strong nose-bridge. In fact, if we compare her to Yaśodharā, who is seen standing by her side, the latter looks darker. The *cāmara-dhārīṇī* therefore appears to have been imported from the Western World, most probably from Iran. This is indicated by her prominent nose and typical headdress.

The presence of women of foreign origin in royal households as chowrie-bearers and maids is interesting inasmuch as

21 *Ibid.*, Pt. I, Pl. XXVI.

it corroborates the evidence from contemporary literature. The Yavanīs were officials of the royal harem and acted as bearers and keepers of the king's personal arms. They constantly accompanied the king and also acted as bodyguards.<sup>22</sup> The foreigners in the palace employ used to wear their own (i.e. foreign) clothes. They were not able to talk with others as they did not know the languages ; they could manage with gestures.<sup>23</sup>

In the *Cāmpeya Jātaka* scene in Cave I, we notice a foreigner serving as a royal bodyguard.<sup>24</sup> He is shown in the group of royal attendants standing behind the king. He is quite tall and hefty and his physiognomy is coarse and rugged. His broad and flat nose, the thin, drooping mustaches with twirled up ends and the ponderous chest are noteworthy. He wears a full-sleeved tunic with round neck and, over it, apparently a chain-mail armour (*loha-jālikā*). On the back he has donned a cape (*ācchādanaka*) which is fastened at the neck in front. His domical cap is broad-brimmed and is crowned by a crescentic member. It is of the *kulaha* type. His physical features and the drooping mustaches remind us of the Mughul invaders of the mediaeval period. He therefore appears to belong to some Central Asian tribe. The Central Asians have also been shown in other panels in their characteristic dress. They were usually employed as royal bodyguards.<sup>25</sup>

The Ajanta illustrations show that Iranians were also employed by Indian kings. An attendant in the *Mahākapi Jātaka* scene (Cave XVII)<sup>26</sup> and another in the 'Palace' scene

22 B. S. Upadhyaya, *India in Kālidāsa*, Delhi, 1968, pp. 135-36.

23 *Antagadadasāo*, trans. L.D. Barnett, London, 1907, pp. 28-29.

24 Yazdani, *op. cit.*, Pt. I, Pl. XXXV.

25 *Ibid.*, Pt. II, Pl. XX.

26 *Ibid.*, Pt. IV, Pl. XI(b).

(Cave I)<sup>27</sup> have been shown wearing tunics and trousers and tall conical caps. There are three more in the scene showing 'the conversion of Nanda' (Cave XVI).<sup>28</sup> Their dress and physiognomy suggest that they are probably of Iranian origin.

The standard-bearer of Padmapāṇi is also a foreigner.<sup>29</sup> The figure is now defaced to a considerable extent and the details of his costume cannot be seen clearly because they are hidden by other figures. However, he appears to wear a full-sleeved tunic with a round neck. His complexion is dark, the nose broad and flat and the lips thick. Besides, a very interesting feature of this figure is the extremely curly hair. On the forehead he wears a jewelled wreath, a characteristic Roman ornament. He is very probably of Negroid origin. This is extremely interesting for it is corroborated by evidence from a Jaina text which tells us that slaves were imported into India from some parts of Africa.<sup>30</sup>

A panel in Cave XVII depicts the Buddha preaching to a large audience.<sup>31</sup> In the gathering, there are several persons who, on account of their dress and physiognomy, can be easily recognised as foreigners. One of them, who is shown riding an elephant, wears a full-sleeved tunic which bears embroidered patterns on the sleeves, arm-bands and chest. At the back, the streamers are seen fluttering. Another person, a horse-rider, also wears a similar dress; but his tunic has a V-shaped neck. He wears a tall conical cap. A second horse-rider, standing by his side, also wears a similar dress. There are two more persons, sitting on the left and holding curved swords and large oval shields. One of them is

27 *Ibid.*, Pt. I, Pl. XXXVII.

28 *Ibid.*, Pt. III, Pl. LIII.

29 *Ibid.*, Pt. I, Pl. XXIV.

30 *Antagadadasāo*, pp. 28-29.

31 Yazdani, *op.cit.*, Pt. IV, Pl. XXXIX.

bearded and the other clean shaven. Their costume is similar to that of the preceding ones. Yet one more person with a similar dress has, in addition, a waist-band (*kamarband*). He has also donned a headgear, which is neither conical nor domical, but looks like a turban. All these persons are characterised by coarse, rugged features. They have been identified by Moti Chandra<sup>32</sup> as Iranians, while, according to Yazdani, they belong to the regions adjoining the north-west frontier of India.<sup>33</sup> It is, however, very difficult to say anything precisely in this regard. But it seems likely that they are the chieftains of some nomadic tribes of Central Asia where Buddhism had made much headway at a very early period. This is further corroborated by the resemblance between the physiognomy of these people and that of the Tokharian cavaliers portrayed in a 7th century fresco at Bezeklik.<sup>34</sup>

In the same panel, we also notice a group of ten female figures who are attending the congregation.<sup>35</sup> Of these, two are apparently foreigners. The one on the left is wearing an embroidered headdress to which is attached a veil of white gauze; the headdress also has an ornamental band round the forehead. A very similar headdress is worn by a palace maid in the famous scene showing the 'Dying Princess' in Cave XVI.<sup>36</sup> The headdress together with the veil is strikingly similar to that of a Palmyrene lady.<sup>37</sup> Both the ladies therefore can be taken to be Syrians. The other

32 *Op.cit.*, p.211.

33 *Op. cit.*, Pt. IV, Text, p. 69.

34 See Henry Seyrig, in *Syria*, Vol. XVIII, 1937, p. 12, Pl. II(2).

35 Yazdani, *op. cit.*, Pt. IV, Pl. XL(a).

36 *Ibid.*, Pt. III, Pl. LII.

37 Millia Davenport, *The Book of Costume*, New York, 1962, p. 78, Fig. 276.

lady in the congregation, who wears a striped gown, may also be a Syrian. Yazdani thought that "the artist apparently had in mind the dress and physiognomy of Parthian women."<sup>38</sup> But Parthians were a thing of the past by the fifth century, and it is therefore difficult to agree with Yazdani.

A very curious personality is a *bhikṣu* in the group of monks shown in the scene of the distribution of alms.<sup>39</sup> The person wears a long sleeveless gown with slits for arms. His headgear is tall and conical, and curiously enough, a skull has been fixed in it. His complexion is fair and he can therefore be taken to be a foreigner. He is perhaps a subject of the Byzantine empire who came to India and, as the skull would show, became a *Kāpālīka*.<sup>40</sup>

On the left wall of Cave XVII are painted some episodes from the *Vessantara Jātaka*.<sup>41</sup> One of them shows four friars who had arrived too late on the day of 'the gift of seven hundreds'. One of these friars has been indentified by Yazdani as a Chinese because of his Mongoloid features. He further thinks that he was painted by some Chinese artist who had come all the way to Ajanta with the object of learning Buddhist religious art to embellish the shrines of his own country with similar subjects.<sup>42</sup> The person indentified as Chinese has slit eyes, sharp thin nose and drooping mustaches. In fact, on closer observation,

38 *Op.cit.*, Pt. IV, Text, pp. 66-67.

49 *Ibid.*, Pt. III, Pl. LXIV.

40 The infiltration of these Roman subjects into India has been attributed to their persecution by the Byzantine emperors. See H. Goetz, 'Imperial Rome and the Genesis of Classic Indian Art', *East and West*, Vol. X, 1959, pp. 261-62.

41 Yazdani, *op. cit.*, Pt. IV, Pl. XXIII.

42 'Chinese Artists and an Ajanta Painting', S. K. Belvalkar *Felicitations Vol.*, Banaras, 1957, pp. 247-48.

it becomes clear that all the four friars have similar physical features, and they look more like Tibetans who used to come to India in large numbers for pilgrimage.

The foregoing analysis of the evidence from the Ajanta paintings shows that a majority of foreigners depicted in them are Iranians. This obviously was due to India's intimate contact with Sassanid Iran during the Vākāṭaka-Gupta period. The trade between the two countries was in a flourishing state and even though the overland route through the mountain passes in the north-west existed from a very early period, the sea-ports on the western coast were equally important for the sea-borne trade with the western world.<sup>43</sup> It appears that a colony of Iranians existed in Western India during this period.<sup>44</sup> The artists were accustomed to see them frequently and that is why they could be so realistically portrayed in the paintings. This also explains the infiltration of several Iranian elements in Indian culture. Even though the stitched clothes like tunics and trousers were introduced earlier by the Śakas of Central Asia, they took a considerable time to be adopted by Indians, for it is only in the Vākāṭaka-Gupta period that we find Indians wearing them, though rarely. The Ajanta evidence shows that kings wore trousers and tunic when they went a-hunting. High army officers also wore them ; but, in addition, they also donned a cape (*ācchādanaka*) which was possibly introduced by the Sassanians.<sup>45</sup> Even prince Siddhārtha as a child has been shown in this foreign garb in the

43 Raghu is said to have proceeded to Iran by land route implying thereby that an alternate sea-route existed. See *Raghu*, IV. 60.

44 Moti Chandra, *Geographical and Economic Studies in the Mahābhārata—Upāyana Parva*, Lucknow, p. 104.

45 For an excellent illustration of this type of cape, see Andre Godard, *The Art of Iran*, London, 1965, Fig. 101.

paintings.<sup>46</sup> All this goes to show that this was the time when these foreign elements were being Indianized and assimilated in the pattern of culture.

We have already seen that it becomes extremely difficult to fix the nationality of the foreigners depicted in the paintings. This, in the main, is due to the similarity in their dress which consists of a full-sleeved tunic and trousers and high boots. The confusion is due to the fact that this was originally the dress of the Śakas (Scythians of Classical literature). "Their characteristic outfit was the pointed cap and long, wide trousers of a soft material, which were sometimes tucked into pliable boots reaching halfway upto the calves. The coat was of the same material as the trousers and was fastened by a belt. Sometimes it was so cut as to form a sort of apron which reached down the knees."<sup>47</sup> This costume was admirably adapted to the Scythian ways of life and fighting.

This nomadic costume spread over the whole of Iran and deep into Syria. It also became the costume of the Parthians, with the exception of the pointed cap. As this costume was common over most of Western Asia, it cannot be taken as a criterion for identifying persons of different nationalities depicted in the paintings.

As compared to the Sassanid Iranians, there are only a few Central Asians in the paintings. Central Asians are known to us from a very early time ; but only a few could have reached as far as Western India in those days of difficult communication. The evidence from the paintings shows that a few could have found employment in royal households, at least in this part of the country. Some

46 Yazdani, *op. cit.*, Pt. III, Pl. LXIII ; also another child in Persian dress in Pt. III, Pl. L.

47 Ludwig Bachhoffer, 'On Greeks and Śakas in India', *JAOS*, Vol. 61, 1941, p. 247.



Central Asians might have been employed in the territories ruled by the Western Kṣatrapas who themselves were of Śāka origin. But after their downfall in the 4th century, many of these foreign employees would have migrated to the adjoining areas for employment. Similarly, very few Tibetans could have reached the Deccan in the course of their pilgrimage to Buddhist shrines. But the Chinese must have been extremely rare in these parts of the country, for they are not to be seen at Ajanta. This is surprising, for our contact with China was growing in the Vākāṭaka-Gupta age, and history tells us that several Chinese visited India at that time. But even the most celebrated of them all, Hiuen-tsang, confined his itinerary to Northern or at best to Central India ; whatever he has recorded about Maharashtra in general and Ajanta in particular was all based on hearsay.\* This would explain the absence of the Chinese at Ajanta.

\* [ This does not appear to be quite correct.— Ed. ]

## II

### ASOKA'S EDICTS FOR THE YAVANAS AND KAMBOJAS

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V. A. Smith believed that, according to the Classical authors, Seleucus surrendered to Candragupta Maurya (c. 324-300 B. C.) the districts of Aria (Herat region), Arachosia (Kandahar area), Paropamisadae (Kabul region) and Gedrosia (Beluchistan area),<sup>1</sup> while W. W. Tarn thinks that Candragupta received no part even of the Paropamisadae, but only the land lying 'east of a line starting from the Kunar river and following the watershed to somewhere near Quetta and then going to the sea by Kalat and the Purali river'.<sup>2</sup> But Tarn conceded that Aśoka (c. 272-232 B.C.), grandson of Candragupta, 'established some form of rule or suzerainty over the Paropamisadae'.<sup>3</sup> This is rather unconvincing because Aśoka does not claim the conquest of any territory other than Kalinga. After the discovery of Aśoka's Kandahar edicts in 1958 and 1964, it can be said that Tarn's views are wrong and that Smith is right at least in respect of the inclusion of Central and Southern Afghanistan in Aśoka's empire inherited from his father and grandfather. Uttarāpatha with Takṣaśilā (Taxila) as its capital was included in the empire of Bindusāra according to tradition.<sup>4</sup>

1 *EHI*, 1924 ed., pp. 159-60.

2 *The Greeks in Bactria and India*, 1967, p. 100.

3 *Ibid.*, p. 101. Tarn's contention that RE V calls the Greeks (in company with the Kambojas, Gandhāras and Rāṣṭrikas) a frontier people while RE XIII mentions them as Aśoka's subjects 'is based on misunderstanding because the words *anta* and *pratyanta* are used by Aśoka to indicate the people inhabiting the outlying districts of the Maurya empire as also those who lived outside. It has been overlooked that the Gandhāras and Rāṣṭrikas, mentioned together with the Yavanas (Greeks), cannot be regarded as living outside Aśoka's empire.

4 Cf. *Divyāvadāna*, ed. Cowell and Neil, p. 371.

In the year 1958, a rock edict of the Maurya emperor Aśoka was discovered in Southern Afghanistan at a place called Shar-i-Kuna near Kandahar in the vicinity of the site of the ancient city of 'Alexandria among the Arachosians,' founded by Alexander the Great. It is a bilingual record, one of the versions being Greek meant for the Greek or Yavana subjects of the Maurya emperors. The other version is in Aramaic which was the language of the Achaemenian administration and was apparently meant for the Kambojas who were Iranians settled in the north-western region of the Maurya empire and are mentioned in Aśoka's edicts (RE V and XIII) as a subject people. Both the versions were published in Italian by Scerato, Tucci, Carratelli and della Vida in a booklet entitled *Un editio bilingue greco-aramaico di Asoka*, Rome, 1958, and in French by Schlumberger, Robert, Dupont-Sommer and Benveniste in the *Journal Asiatique*, 1958, pp. 1 ff. See also D. C. Sircar in *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. XXXIII, pp. 333 ff., and J. Filliozat in the same journal, Vol. XXXIV, pp. 1 ff.

The contents of the edict, which we have called Minor Rock Edict IV, are as follows.<sup>5</sup>

### Greek Version.

"Ten years having elapsed since his coronation, king Priyadarśin (Aśoka) has been showing piety to the people. And since then, he has rendered the people more pious, and all people prosper on the whole earth.—And the king abstains from the slaughter of living beings, and other people including the king's hunters and fishermen have given up hunting. And those who could not control themselves have now ceased not to control themselves as far as they can.—And they have

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5 See Sircar, *Inscriptions of Aśoka*, Delhi, 1967, pp. 44-45. At p. 44, line 26, read - at a place near Kandahar.

become obedient to their father and mother and to the old people, contrary to what was the case previously. And, henceforth, by so acting, they will live in an altogether better and more profitable way."

#### Aramaic Version.<sup>4</sup>

"Ten years having passed, it so happened that our lord, Priyadarśin (Aśoka), became the institutor of Truth. Since then, evil decreased among all men, and all misfortunes he caused to disappear, and here are now peace and joy on the whole earth.—And, moreover, there is this to note in regard to food : for our lord, the king, only a few animals are killed ; having seen this, all men have given up the slaughter of animals ; even the fishermen are now subject to prohibition.—Similarly, those who are without restraint have now ceased to be without restraint. And obedience to mother and to father and to old men flourishes now in conformity with the obligations imposed by fate on each person. And, for all the pious men, there is no final Judgment.—This (i.e. the practice of Dharma) has been profitable to all men and will be more profitable in future."

In the year 1964, another Greek inscription of Aśoka was discovered near Kandahar which appears to have been the headquarters of a province in which the concentration of the Greek (Yavana) and Kamboja subjects of Aśoka was the most conspicuous, even though both the peoples may have had other settlements in Afghanistan and West Pakistan. This inscription was first published by Daniel Schlumberger in 'Une nouvelle inscription grecque d'Aśoka', *Comptes rendus des séances de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres*, 1964, pp. 1-15, and later by Émile Benveniste in 'Édits d'Aśoka en Traduction Grecque', *Journal Asiatique*, 1964, pp. 137-57.

This new Greek inscription corresponds to Rock Edicts XII and XIII, though the earlier part of RE XII and the latter part of RE XIII are lacking. The above fact suggests that the present record is a continuation of what was engraved elsewhere in the neighbourhood and was itself continued in another place. From this it may be legitimately conjectured that a Greek version of the whole set of the fourteen major Rock Edicts of Aśoka was engraved at the place concerned. It is also possible to conjecture further that, side by side with the said Greek version, an Aramaic version of the fourteen Rock Edicts were also engraved for the Kamboja people of the locality.

We quote below, for the sake of comparison, our translation of the Shahbazgarhi version of Rock Edicts XII and XIII side by side with our translation of the fragments of the Kandahar version of the two edicts, which is based on the French translation of Schlumberger and Benveniste as explained to us by M. R. Piart, Director of Alliance Française de Calcutta.

#### **Shahbazgarhi Version of RE XII.<sup>6</sup>**

‘King Priyadarśin, Beloved of the Gods (Aśoka), honours men of all religious communities with gifts and with honours of various kinds, irrespective of whether they are ascetics or householders. But the Beloved of the Gods does not value either the offering of gifts or the honouring of people so highly as the following, viz., that there should be a growth of the essentials of Dharma among men of all sects.—And the growth of the essentials of Dharma is possible in many ways. But its root lies in restraint in regard to speech, which means that there should be no extolment of one’s own sect or disparagement of other sects on inappropriate occasions and that

6 Sircar, *op. cit.*, pp. 55-56.

it should be moderate in every case even on appropriate occasions. On the contrary, other sects should be duly honoured in every way on all occasions.—If a person acts in this way, he not only promotes his own sect, but also benefits other sects. However, if a person acts otherwise, he not only injures his own sect, but also harms other sects. Truly, if a person extols his own sect and disparages other sects with a view to glorifying his sect owing merely to his attachment to it he injures his own sect very severely by acting in that way. Therefore restraint in regard to speech is commendable, because people should learn and respect the fundamentals in one another's Dharma.—This indeed is the desire of the Beloved of the Gods (Aśoka) that persons of all sects become well-informed about the doctrines of different religions and acquire pure knowledge. And those who are attached to their respective sects should be informed as follows : 'The Beloved of the Gods does not value either the offering of gifts or the honouring of people so highly as the following, viz., that there should be a growth of the essentials of Dharma among men of all sects.—Indeed, many of my officers are engaged for the realization of the said end, such as the Mahāmātras in charge of the affairs relating to Dharma, the Mahāmātras who are superintendents of matters relating to the ladies of the royal household, the officers in charge of my cattle and pasture lands, and other classes of officials. And the result of their activities, as expected by me, is the promotion of each one's sect and the glorification of Dharma.' "

#### **Kandahar Version of RE XII.**

".....[King Priyadarśin does not value the offering of the gifts or the honouring of people so highly as the following, viz.,] piety and self-control among all schools (i.e. among the people of all religious sects). One can keep self-control best when one controls one's tongue. And let them not extol

themselves (i.e. their own sects) and disparage others (i.e. other sects) on any account. For this is conceit, and it is better to try to extol other [sects] and not to disparage them in any manner. By doing this, they become greater and gain the good will of others ; by transgressing this, they do a disservice to their name and attract the ill will of others. Those who extol themselves (i.e. their own sects) and disparage other [sects] evince inordinate pride ; by wanting to shine more than others, they rather harm themselves. It is advisable to respect oneanother mutually and, for every one, to accept the lessons of others. By doing this, they will increase their knowledge by passing on mutually what every one of them knows. Let there be no hesitation about telling this to those who put this into practice, so that they may persist always in piety."

**Shahbazgarhi Version of RE XIII.<sup>7</sup>**

"The country of the Kalingas was conquered by king Priyadarśin, Beloved of the Gods (Aśoka), eight years after his coronation. In this war in Kalinga, men and animals, numbering one hundred and fifty thousand were carried away captive from that country, as many as one hundred thousand were killed there in action, and many times that number perished. After that, now that the country of the Kalingas has been conquered, the Beloved of the Gods is devoted to an intense practice of the duties relating to Dharma, to a longing for Dharma and to the inculcation of Dharma among the people. This is due to the repentance of the Beloved of the Gods on having conquered the country of the Kalingas. —Verily, the slaughter, death and deportation of men which take place in the course of the conquest of an unconquered country are now considered extremely painful and deplorable

7. *Ibid.*, pp. 56-59.

by the Beloved of the Gods. But what is considered even more deplorable by the Beloved of the Gods is the fact that injury to or slaughter or deportation of the beloved ones falls to the lot of the Brāhmaṇas, the Śramaṇas, the adherents of other sects and the householders, who live in that country and among whom are established such virtues as obedience to superior personages, obedience to mother and father, obedience to elders and proper courtesy and firm devotion to friends, acquaintances, companions and relatives as well as to slaves and servants. And, if misfortune befalls the friends, acquaintances, companions and relatives of persons who are full of affection towards the former, even though they are themselves well provided for, the said misfortune as well becomes an injury to their own selves. In war, this fate is shared by all classes of men and is considered deplorable by the Beloved of the Gods. —Now, really there is no person who is not sincerely devoted to a particular religious sect.<sup>8</sup> Therefore the slaughter, death or deportation of even a hundredth part of all those people who were slain or who died or were carried away captive at that time in Kalinga, is now considered very deplorable by the Beloved of the Gods. —Now the Beloved of the Gods thinks that, even if a person should wrong him, the offence would be forgiven if it is possible to forgive it. And the forest-folk who live in the dominions of the Beloved of the Gods, even them he entreats and exhorts in regard to their duty. It is hereby explained to them, that, in spite of his repentance, the Beloved of the Gods possesses power enough to punish them for their crimes, so that they should

8. This is put differently in the other versions. The Kalsi version, e.g., says, "Excepting the country of the Yavanas, there is no country where these two classes, viz., the Brāhmaṇas and the Śramaṇas, do not exist; and there is no place in any country where men are not indeed sincerely devoted to one sect or the other." See *ibid.*, p. 58n.



turn away from evil ways and would not be killed for their crimes. Verily, the Beloved of the Gods desires the following in respect of all creatures, viz., non-injury to them, restraint in dealing with them, and impartiality in the case of crimes committed by them. —So, what is conquest through Dharma is now considered to be the best conquest by the Beloved of the Gods. And such a conquest has been achieved by the Beloved of the Gods not only here in his own dominions, but also in the territories bordering on his dominions, as far away as at the distance of six hundred *yojanas*, where the Yavana king named Antiyoka is ruling and where, beyond the kingdom of the said Antiyoka, four other kings named Turamāya, Antikini, Makā and Alikasundara are also ruling, and, towards the south where the Colas and Pāṇdyas are living as far as Tāmraparṇī. Likewise, here in the dominions of His Majesty, the Beloved of the Gods,—in the countries of the Yavanas and Kambojas, of the Nābhakas and Nābhapaṅktis, of the Bhoja-paitryaṇikas and of the Andhras and Pulindas—everywhere people are conforming to the instructions in Dharma imparted by the Beloved of the Gods. —Even where the envoys of the Beloved of the Gods have not penetrated, there too men have heard of the practices of Dharma and the ordinances issued and the instructions in Dharma imparted by the Beloved of the Gods, and are conforming to Dharma and will continue to conform to it. —So, whatever conquest is achieved in this way, verily, that conquest creates an atmosphere of satisfaction everywhere both among the victors and the vanquished. In the conquest through Dharma, satisfaction is derived by both the parties. But that satisfaction is indeed of little consequence. Only happiness of the people in the next world is what is regarded by the Beloved of the Gods as a great thing resulting from such a conquest. —And this record relating to Dharma has

been written on stone for the following purpose, viz., that my sons and great-grandsons should not think of a fresh conquest by arms as worth achieving, that they should adopt the policy of forbearance and light punishment towards the vanquished even if they conquer a people by arms, and that they should regard the conquest through Dharma as the true conquest. Such a conquest brings happiness to all concerned both in this world and in the next. And let all their intense joys be what is pleasure associated with Dharma. For this brings happiness in this world as well as in the next."

#### Kandahar Version of RE XIII.

"In the eighth year of his reign, Priyadarśin conquered Kalinga. One hundred and fifty thousand persons were captured there and deported from there, one hundred thousand others were killed, and almost as many perished. Since that time, pity and compassion gripped him, and he was overwhelmed by that. Just as he prescribed to abstain from living beings, he established zeal in the organisation for piety. And, behold, what the king was still more afflicted by (or, this also the king felt with great sorrow): all those who inhabited there (i.e. in Kalinga), the Brāhmaṇas or Śramaṇas or other followers of piety as well—those who inhabited there had to be concerned about the interests of the king, to revere and respect their teacher, their father and mother, to love and not to deceive their friends and companions, and to treat their slaves and servants as mildly as possible (or, with the utmost kindness possible)—if, from among those who were behaving there like that, one was dead or deported, other people are also indirectly affected by this, and the king is extremely afflicted by it. And, as with the other peoples, there is [no place in the country where men are not indeed sincerely devoted to one sect or the other.]....."

When we compare the Greek version of the two edicts with their Prakrit versions which are written in Brāhmī and Kharoṣṭhī and are found in different parts of India and West Pakistan, the first thing that attracts our attention is that the former is not really a Greek translation of the latter, but represents a condensed version.

This reminds us of RE XIV in which Aśoka himself says, "In the series of records, there are, forsooth, texts written in a concise form, or in a medium form, or in an elaborate form. And all the items of the series have not been put together in all places. For my dominions are wide and much has been written and I shall certainly cause still more to be written."<sup>7</sup>

Another point to which attention may be drawn is that an expression like *daśa-varṣ-ābhiṣikta*, 'when I have been anointed ten years', seems to be correctly rendered in the Greek version of the Kandahar Graeco-Aramaic edict as 'ten years having passed since his coronation'. An expression like *aṣṭavarṣ-ābhiṣikta* has, however, been translated in the Kandahar version of RE XIII as 'in the eighth year of his reign' which does not appear to be what Aśoka meant.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 60.

### III

#### **Influence of the Coins of Foreign Rulers on Indigenous Issues\***

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The question of the impact of foreign coins on the ancient indigenous issues has been discussed by earlier scholars. But the question has not been dealt with in a thorough and comprehensive manner. We ourselves discussed it elsewhere ; but our discussion was confined only to the 'archaic issues', i.e. the most ancient uninscribed pieces and the later inscribed local coins.

The question of foreign influence does not arise with regard to the origin, evolution and manufacture of the four (out of the five) categories of India's 'archaic' coins, viz. (i) the Wheel-marked or the so-called Bent-bar pieces, (ii) the Cup-shaped or Saucer-like coins, (iii) the 'common' Punch-marked coins, and (iv) the uninscribed Cast pieces. For, these categories of coins were manufactured in purely indigenous processes, which were practically unknown outside India. Moreover, these issues do not betray any visible influence of any known foreign coin. Then, with regard to the fifth category of indigenous archaic coins, viz. the uninscribed die-struck pieces, we have already shown that, so far as the earliest known single and double-die coins are concerned, the question of foreign influence also does not arise, since they employed for their manufacture a crude indigenous method without being influenced by any known foreign coin (or series of coins). We have, however, seen that some foreign influence is

\* [The revised copy of the paper was received in February, 1969.—Ed.]

discernible on certain types of uninscribed double-die coins of Taxila. In fact, these coins might well have even been issued by some' foreigners, precisely Greeks. But interestingly enough, inspite of their devices being of somewhat non-Indian character, these issues were modelled on earlier indigenous coins.

Next, with regard to the earliest 'inscribed' coins which were evidently issued subsequent to the above-discussed 'archaic' pieces, we have already shown that foreign influence is conspicuous by its absence on the specimens of the first category, i.e. the inscribed cast coins—manufactured either by 'local' authorities or by 'tribal' chiefs. But so far as the inscribed die-struck coins are concerned, though the issues of some localities and tribes were free from foreign influence, quite a few, however, exhibit the influence of coins issued by the foreign rulers of India.

With these preliminary observations, we would make a brief but comprehensive survey of ancient Indian coins and see where, when and how coins issued by foreign rulers have exercised influence on the indigenous issues. We would follow a somewhat chronological sequence in our present study.

The earliest known foreign coins that the Indians could easily come across were the uninscribed issues of the Achaemenian Persians. The archaic gold *darics* and silver *sigloi* were rather common in North-Western India. But they evidently could not influence any series of contemporary or later indigenous currency either by their types and fabric (which were highly characteristic) or by their technique of manufacture. The view that the weight-standard of the Persian *siglos* was followed by the indigenous wheel-marked coins does not seem to be correct, for we have shown that the wheel-marked pieces were of indigenous *sata-rati* standard and had nothing to do with the weight system of the *siglos*.

The next series of foreign coins that apparently flowed

into India were the issues of the enigmatic Salt Range ruler Sophytes. No known contemporary indigenous coin appears to have been in any way influenced by the thoroughly Greek-type coins of Sophytes.

The coins of the Greek rulers of Bactria (i.e. Northern Afghanistan) came after the Sophytes issues in chronological order, and quite a few finds, specially the discoveries in the Taxila excavations, clearly show that they also flowed freely into India. But, as is evident, the Graeco-Bactrian kings could not exercise any numismatic influence until they occupied Indian territories and actually struck coins in India.

Of the earliest Greek kings in India, the coins of Pantaleon, Agathocles, Eucratides I and Demetrius III are of considerable interest for our study. Pantaleon and Agathocles were the first princes to issue for circulation in India a curious series of bilingual square coins in copper. Though they bear Greek legend on the obverse and an evident stamp of Greek workmanship, they depict on the reverse the figure of Yakṣiṇī Aśvamukhī\* and a legend in Prakrit written in Brāhmī characters. Their weight was of indigenous standard, and they followed the technique of manufacture peculiar to India. Thus, instead of casting any influence indigenous issues, they were themselves influenced to a great extent by coins of purely indigenous origin.

But the silver coins of Eucratides I Megas and Demetrius III Anicetos are the most important for our present study. They followed the Greek technique of manufacture and were of Greek fabric and device. Their legends (both obverse and reverse) followed the Greek formula consisting of the royal title and epithet and the name of the king. But though they

\* [The identification appears to be doubtful to us.—Ed.]

were Greek money in appearance, they did not follow the traditional Greek, i.e. Attic, weight-standard. We have shown elsewhere that the bilingual silver coins of Eucratides I and Demetrius III followed the 80-*rati* standard, which no contemporary indigenous coin is so far known to follow. Silver coins of Eucratides, however, were of a lower denomination and weighed 20 *ratis*, while those of Demetrius were of the higher 80-*rati* denomination. The merit of the newly introduced weight-standard was readily recognised, and it became immensely popular not only with foreign rulers, but also with Indian princes as well. In fact, the 80-*rati* silver standard successfully replaced the traditional 32-*rati* standard of the silver *kārṣāpaṇas*, otherwise known as the Punch-marked coins. But while the Greek, Scythian and Parthian successors of Eucratides I and Demetrius III struck both the 80-*rati* (tetradrachm) and the 20-*rati* (drachm) pieces, Indian princes issued only coins of the latter lower denomination.

The influence of the silver coins of the Indo-Greek rulers on indigenous issues was of an abiding nature. For nearly a millennium to come silver money of Indian princes was of the Indo-Greek standard.

Chiefs of as many as seven Punjab tribes, viz. the Audumbaras, Kulūtas, Kuṇḍas, Vemakis, Vṛṣṇis and Yaudheyas, struck silver coins in the 20-*rati* standard introduced by Eucratides I. Not only this. The concerned issues were in close imitation of the Indo-Greek money not only in the weight-standard, but also in fabric and depiction of devices. In fact, the Elephant-and-Bull silver pieces of Vaimaki Rudravarman and of Mahādeva probably also of the Vaimaki tribe are but slavish imitations of similar coins of the Indo-Greek king Apollodotus I Soter. The depiction of the figure of Viśvāmitra on the coin of Audumbara Dharaghoṣa reminds us of that of the figure of Heracles on the silver

pieces of Lysias. Even coins which do not depict broad devices like the foreign issues, but display symbols in Indian fashion often manifest Indo-Greek influence. Their technique of manufacture and fabric bear an unmistakable Indo-Greek stamp. Then, again, the indigenous issuers of these coins also adopted the Indo-Greek principle of bilingualism by writing the obverse legend in Brāhmī characters and the reverse legend in Kharoṣṭhī characters, since the Punjab region where the coins were in circulation had two different groups of people—one speaking a particular form of Prakrit and using the Brāhmī alphabet and another speaking another Prakrit dialect and using the Kharoṣṭhī script. Moreover, the concerned Punjab chiefs adopted the Indo-Greek form of legends—consisting of [the genitive form of] a royal title, an epithet and the name of the issuer. Though most of them rest content with the simple royal title *Rājan*, Kuṇinda Amoghabhūti called himself a *Mahārāja* and Vaimaki Mahādeva even assumed the imperial title *Rājarāja* (king of kings). The epithet *trātara* as seen on the coin of the Vṛṣṇi king Jñāgaṇa is directly taken from the coins of the Indo-Greek rulers, most of whom, specially in the Punjab, called themselves *Soter* (Saviour) in the obverse Greek legend and *Trātara* in the reverse Prakrit legend. The curious epithet *vijayata* as assumed by Vaimaki Rudravarman speaks of a ‘victory’ on the part of that king and is reminiscent of the Indo-Greek epithets *Nicator* and *Nicephoros* and their Prakrit counterpart *Jayadhara*, all meaning ‘Victorious’.

However, the coins of the Indo-Greek kings were followed by those of the Indo-Scythians and the Indo-Parthians. The Indo-Scythian issues are in most cases slavish replicas of the coins of the Indo-Greek kings. But their common obverse device, viz. the ‘Mounted king’, requires our special attention. It was evidently derived from the coins of the Indo-Greek



rulers like Antimachus II and Philoxenus. The Indo-Parthian kings used this characteristic Scythian device widely on their coins, besides, of course, the Parthian-type royal bust. The 'Mounted king' device, however, remained long out of vogue until the chiefs of Kabul and Ohind took a fancy to it and depicted it on the obverse of their coins.

The next series of coins to be considered by us consists of the characteristic silver issues of the Scythian Satraps of Western India. These coins are of the 20-*rati* standard and were evidently evolved from the Indo-Greek issues. In the beginning, they were of a thin flat fabric like Indo-Greek silver pieces; but gradually they tended to assume a small thick fabric. They were, however, no slavish copies of their Indo-Greek prototypes; and for nearly three centuries they maintained their individuality by following a rigid convention. The coins of the Western Satraps bear on the obverse the issuer's head in a typical Scythian cap along with the date of issue, which never before occurred on any Indian coin. The already corrupt Greek legend written around the issuer's head soon became highly debased, so much so that it turned to be a sort of ornamentation. The reverse of these coins depicts, besides a circular legend, an arrow and a thunderbolt on the issues of the Kṣaharāta chief Nanapāna, and a crescent-topped hill with the symbols for sun and moon and a wavy line on the coins of the Kārdamaka chief Caṣṭana and his successors. The coins of the Western Satraps created a deep impression on the minds of the indigenous people and exercised an abiding influence over all, silver coins struck till about the eighth century A.D.

The Satrapal type silver coin soon became a status symbol for people claiming royal authority. No less than three Śātavāhana monarchs, viz. Vāsiṣṭhīputra Puḥumāvi, Vāsiṣṭhīputra Śātakarṇi and Gautamīputra Yajña-Śātakarṇi issued

limited number of such silver coins probably at the time of their coronation. But while copying the Western Satrap coins, the Śātavāhana mint-masters did not imitate them in a slavish manner, but introduced in them some new features which would promptly differentiate them from their prototypes. The weight-standard, denomination and the fabric of the Satrapal issues were maintained ; but a distinct deviation was effected in the matter of execution of the obverse portrait and the reverse device and also of writing the legends. The king's head (not bust) was depicted in the Indian fashion : the characteristic Western Satrap head-dress was rightly discarded and the capless head of the Indian monarch was quite faithfully depicted as wearing a crest jewel, and in the case of Gautamīputra Yajña-Śātakarni, the royal head was adorned with ear-ornaments and the Brāhmaṇical *śikhā*. The utterly corrupt and meaningless Greek-type obverse legend, which virtually served the purpose of a border-decoration around the portrait of the Western Satrap coins, was replaced by a clearly legible Northern Prakrit legend written in Brāhmī characters of the Northern variety. On the reverse, the characteristic Satrapal device was replaced by a distinctive Śātavāhana device consisting of the crescent-topped Ujjain symbol and the six-peaked hill with a wavy line below ; and surrounding the device is an interesting legend which is but a faithful Dravidian Prakrit rendering of the obverse legend written in Brāhmī characters of the Southern variety.

The Ābhīra interloper Īśvaradatta with his temporary away over the Kathiawad region, and Dahrasena and Vyāghrasena, the two Traikūṭaka chiefs of Southern Gujarat and some adjoining territories, also struck some 20-*raṭi* silver coins slavishly imitating the coins of the Western Satraps.

Candragupta II, after annexing the dominions of the Western Satraps, issued a silver currency closely copied from Western

Satrap prototypes, apparently for circulation in the conquered territory. These 20-*rati* Gupta coins bear on the obverse the Scythian-type royal bust and the meaningless traces of the once significant Greek legend around it, though the year of issue was given in the Gupta era instead of the Śaka era and the three-peaked hill was replaced by the figure of Garuḍa. Kumāragupta who issued the Garuḍa-reverse silver coins for his western provinces, introduced a characteristic silver type for his central provinces, which replaced the Garuḍa figure by a peacock. Skandagupta not only issued both the Garuḍa- and peacock-type silver coins, but also introduced two more new types, one bearing a 'burning altar' and another, the figure of a recumbent bull. Budhagupta issued the peacock-type coins alone. The successors of the Guptas kept up the tradition of issuing the 20-*rati* Indian drachm on the model of the Gupta coins.

In Western India, the Valabhī rulers struck Gupta-type silver coins with fragmentary legends significantly replacing the figure of Garuḍa by a trident. But the peacock device remained popular for quite a long time, and we see closely copied Gupta-type silver coins circulating in various localities of Northern India. The Hūṇa chief Toramāṇa struck silver coins with the reverse device of peacock. The Maukhari chiefs Iśānavarman, Śarvavarman and Avantivarman, with their sway over Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, the Puṣyabhūti kings Pratāpaśīla-Prabhākaravardhana and Śīlāditya-Harṣavardhana (of Kanauj), and the South Kosala prince Bhīmasena slavishly copied the peacock-type silver coin of the Guptas.

## Fa-hien—a Perspective

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The visit of Fa-hien to India and his observations on the conditions prevailing in the country during the 4th and 5th centuries A.D. are described at length in leading text books and monographs on Indian history.<sup>1</sup> His travelogue is freely utilised as a handy source material to portray the greatness of the benevolent and cultured epoch of the Guptas. It may, however, be pointed out that these portrayals and descriptions have been made mostly from the Indian perspective and without reference to the prior inter-statal contacts that existed then between India on the one hand and China and the South East Asian countries on the other. Since these interstatal contacts constitute the obvious and necessary background of the visit of Fa-hien it is proposed in this paper to examine the multiplicity of factors that contributed to the growth of such contacts.<sup>2</sup>

Fa-hien, a native of the Shensi province of China, along with others, started on a voyage to India in 379 A.D. The purpose of his mission was to acquire the texts dealing with Buddhism in order to prepare an authentic compendium for the use of Chinese Buddhists. Fa-hien's party, though it

1 See R. K. Mookerji, *The Gupta Empire ; History and Culture of the Indian People* (Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan), Vol. III ; Majumdar and Altekar, *The Vākāṭaka-Gupta Age* ; and R. S. Tripathi, *History of Ancient India*.

2 The main source material is the *Fo-kuo-ki* of the pilgrim. The translations used are : Beal, *Buddhist Records of the Western World*, and Giles, *The Travels of Fa-hsien*. The other translation is that of Legge. Remusat's French translation is the earliest (1836). The most important publication covering the present topic is P. C. Bagchi, *India and China*.

[ Beal's work is a translation of Hiuen-tsang's *Si-yu-ki*.—Ed. ]

consisted of a number of pilgrims of the Buddhist faith, dwindled in course of the travel. One died on the way ; several returned to China before the completion of the schedule of their travel ; one monk of the party resolved to stay in India as he was presumably impressed by the spiritual elevation he experienced in the country. Enduring severe hardships, the party visited as many as thirty different regions all over Asia. Staying in India for six years and for two years in Ceylon, Fa-hien finally went back to his country in 411 A.D. and spent the rest of his life in the preparation of authentic Buddhist texts.

Fa-hien started on his travels from Chang-an (the present Sian in the province of Shen-si) in Northern China. Along with other priests who had joined him at Chang-yeh (Kansu province), he crossed the Great Wall, and managed to traverse the Gobi desert and arrived at Shen-Shen, the first kingdom which he visited. This territory near Lop Nor situated at the extremity of Central Asia, was already a seat of Buddhism.<sup>3</sup> In the Central Asian regions, these pilgrims following the course of the Tarim, visited Kara-shahr (ancient Agni-deśa), Khotan, and Kashghar. The account shows that these places were already centres teeming with Buddhist monasteries. Passing through the Central Asian regions, the party arrived at the Valley of the Swat near the Hindu Kush (the territory of Uddiyāna). From here Fa-hien crossed the region of Gandhāra with its important places like Takṣaśilā and Puruṣapura, and

3 The eastern extremity of Central Asia is either described as the region of Lop Nor or that of the Tarim Basin. The region of Lop Nor is a salty-marsh. The river Tarim is another landmark and is responsible for the creation of a number of oases which offer shelter for the travellers after the gruesome journey through the Gobi. For a descriptive account of Lop Nor and the Tarim Basin, see Spencer, *Asia, East by South : A Cultural Geography*, pp. 347-48. Also see Rene Grousset, *The Rise and Splendour of the Chinese Empire*, pp. 69 ff.

entered the region of Bhida or the Punjab. Going along the river Jamuna, the party visited the cities of Mathurā, Sāṅkāśya, and Kanauj. Crossing the Ganges and entering the kingdom of Ayodhyā, Fa-hien and the party followed the ancient pilgrims' route to visit the places consecrated by their association with the Buddha. These were Śrāvastī where the Buddha performed a miracle ; Kapilavāstu, the capital of the Śākya clan ; Lumbinī where the Buddha was born ; and Kuśinagara where the *parinirvāṇa* took place. After visiting these places, the pilgrim made a tour of important places of Buddhist worship in North India, like Vaiśālī, Pāṭaliputra, Buddhagayā, Varāṇasī Kauśāmbī and Campā.

Fa-hien's return journey started at Tāmralipti (at the mouth of the river Hooghly) as he preferred to go back by the sea-route. Boarding a ship at Tāmralipti, he reached Ceylon, stayed there for two years and secured some Buddhist texts. From Ceylon, he proceeded to Java, boarding a merchant vessel carrying 200 people.<sup>4</sup> He stayed in Java for a period of five months. Once again he embarked upon a merchant vessel and, after facing some perils of the sea, reached the shores of China and landed near the Kow-chou bay in the Shantung province of China.<sup>5</sup>

It may be noted from the preceding narrative that Fa-hien undertook this pilgrimage to India at a time when travel was hazardous and the means of communication were scarcely developed. This naturally leads one to examine as to why this difficult trip was undertaken and to analyse the circumstances that shaped and prompted the visit and also made it feasible. It is, of course, well established that it was Buddhism and the

4. Fa-hien designates this territory as 'Yepoti'. Some scholars equate this with Malaya. For discussion, see Purcell, *The Chinese, in South-East Asia*, p. 17 ; Le May, *The Culture of South-East Asia*, p. 32 ; and K. A. N. Sastri, *South Indian Influences in the Far East*, p. 111.

5 See Giles, *loc. cit.*, p. 79.

intellectual urge to learn about it from the country of its origin that was mainly responsible for inducing Fa-hien to come to India. But this once again leads to the next question as to how Buddhism found its way to China and as to its impact on the Chinese mind. Another fact of the problem relates to the circumstances that led to the effective formation of the land- and sea-route between India and China that was availed of by Fa-hien's party. It is not possible to understand these geographical and religious angles in isolation without an insight into the political and economic motivations. These different facts can be appreciated and understood by a review of the ancient history of India and China with particular reference to their contacts with the regions outside their natural frontiers.

India's contacts with the neighbouring areas of Asia in the early period of her history extended to the regions of West Asia. Right from the period of the Indus Valley civilisation, she maintained commercial and cultural contacts, first with Mesopotamia and later with Persia. A new orientation in the field of these external contacts was imparted by the Mauryan rulers. The policy of maintaining friendly relations with Asiatic Greeks, which began in the reign of Candragupta Maurya (324-299 B. C.), led to the development of commercial relations between India and the Mediterranean world.<sup>6</sup> The missionary zeal of Aśoka (272-236 B. C.) was responsible for extending these contacts also towards the eastern regions of Asia. According to tradition (*Mahāvamsa*), Aśoka was responsible for sending two messengers, Soṇa and Uttara, to Suvarṇabhūmi identified by scholars as the region of South-East Asia (Indo-Chinese Peninsula and the East Indies). Presumably, this was the starting point of India's cultural ex-

<sup>6</sup> See Rostovtzeff, *The Social and Economic History of the Hellenistic World*, Vol. I, pp. 459 ff.

pansion towards South-East Asia. The missionary zeal of Buddhism was shortly reinforced by economic motives. The increase in demand for Asian products by the Roman people led to a large scale development of trade with Rome, which in its turn gave impetus to the Indian merchants to frequent the lands of South-East Asia where varieties of articles greatly in demand in the West were available.<sup>7</sup> Merchants were soon followed by princes and Brāhmaṇas, and the process ultimately culminated in the foundation of Hinduised states in South-East Asia in the 2nd century A. D.<sup>8</sup> The upshot of all this activity was the effective formation of sea-routes from Indian ports like Tāmralipti, carrying Indian merchant vessels as far as China.

India, which fared well during the epoch already outlined in building up a maritime tradition, did not build up with equal zest a continental tradition of establishing trade-routes by land to the Central Asian regions. The solitary effort in this direction was made by king Kaṇiṣka of the Kuṣāṇa dynasty, who ruled in the 1st century A. D. Coming from the regions of Central Asia, he imbibed Indian culture and exported it to the regions of Central Asia. He had one foot in the heart of India, with his capital at Mathurā,\* and the other at Peshawar, the

7 Rawlinson, *Intercourse between India and the Western World*, pp. 101 ff.; *A Comprehensive History of India*, Vol. II, pp. 441 ff.; and *History and Culture of the Indian People*, Vol. III, p. 651.

8. The earliest Hinduised state according to the evidence of Chinese annals was Ye-tiao (Yavadvīpa or Java). The annals record the embassy sent by king Tiao-pien (Devavarman) in 132 A.D. The first Sanskrit inscription is, however, to be found in Campā (the present North Vietnam) and is dated in the 3rd century A.D. See R. C. Majumdar, *op. cit.*, p. 656; also see K. A. N. Sastri, *History of Śrīvijaya*, p. 13. For the inscription hailing from Campā, see D. C. Sircar, *Journ. Great. Ind. Soc.* Vol. VI.

\* [See above, pp.—5-6. See also Sircar, *Problems of Kuṣāṇa and Rājput History*, pp. 5ff.—Ed.]



second capital, which lay adjacent to the Central Asian regions. Due to his missionary zeal, the regions of Gandhāra completely came under Buddhist influence. What Aśoka did for the propagation of Buddhism in India, Kaṇiṣka did for the regions of North-Western India and Central Asia.<sup>9</sup> The martial tribes inhabiting these regions, under the influence of Kaṇiṣka, embraced the new creed of Mahāyāna Buddhism. Buddhist *stūpas* and monasteries were gradually erected first in the region of Gandhāra, and later in Central Asia. The Buddhist settlements which grew in the Central Asian regions were: Yarkhand (directly above the region of Gilgit adjacent to Kashmir), Khotan and Niya (to the west of Yarkhand), Kucha and Kara-shahr (in the upper region of the Tarim) and Miron (near Lop Nor). Archaeological explorations conducted in these regions have revealed not only the discovery of Buddhist monuments, but also manuscripts pertaining to Buddhism written in Indian languages and script.<sup>10</sup> When Buddhism touched the Central Asian regions, it confronted China.

The picture of Indian expansion, which is mainly cultural and economic, may well be contrasted with the Chinese expansion which was calculated political expansionism. China's political expansion occurred, in the main, during the heyday of her first empire, namely, the Han, which rose in the 2nd century B. C. and continued its hold till the 3rd century A. D. Though the foundation of the Chinese empire enveloping the entire mainland was laid, long before the Hans, by Shih Huang-ti (246–210 B. C.) who constructed the Northern Wall, the ex-

9 McGovern, *The Early Empires of Central Asia*, pp. 251 ff.

10 For an elaborate account of the progress of archaeology and discoveries of Buddhist sites and manuscripts, see *Journal of the Greater India Society*, Vol. IX, pp. 62 ff. See also B. C. Law, 'Expansion of Buddhism in India and Abroad', *New Indian Antiquary*, Vol. II, pp. 707 ff.; and P. C. Bagchi, *India and China*, pp. 9 ff. and 147 ff.

tension of political and material splendour occurred as a result of the work of the rulers of the Han dynasty like emperor Wu-ti (140-87 B. C.).<sup>11</sup> One of the major drives of the foreign policy of the Han rulers was to defeat the Huns and Mongols settled in the north and north-western regions and to clear and control the Tarim basin in order to connect the overland trade-route with the western world. Emperor Wu-ti deputed his valiant generals, Wei-tsing, Hoku-bing and Li Guing-li, to establish Chinese authority in the regions. The generals improved the technique of warfare, successfully combated the Huns and established the Chinese protectorate in the Tarim Basin about 101 B. C.<sup>12</sup> Though the authority of the Chinese was temporarily lost, it was restored once again during the reign of emperor Ming-ti (58-75 A. D.).<sup>13</sup> Finally during the reign of Ho-ti (75-105 A. D.), the Chinese general Pan-chao (known for his conflict with Kaniska)\* pushed the Chinese frontier upto Yarkhand.<sup>14</sup> Contemporaneous with these conquests of the Central Asian regions, a long land-route leading from the north-western province of Kansu developed. Thus the effective formation of an overland trade-route between China and the western world was finally accomplished. China began to export large quantities of silk and other articles through this vital Central Asian land-route.

11 For the work of the first emperor, see Reishauer and Fairbank, *East Asia : The Great Tradition*, pp. 86 ff.

12 The conflict of the Huns and Chinese in Central Asia is portrayed at length by McGovern, *op. cit.*, pp. 130 ff.

13 Reishauer and Fairbank, *op. cit.*, pp. 123-24.

\* [The name of the Ta Yue-chi king defeated by Pan-chao is not mentioned by the Chinese analysts.—Ed.]

14. The chief export of Han China was silk. Rolls of silk were even used as token money in China during this period. Hence the trade-route to the Central Asian regions is known as the Silk Road. See Rene Grousset, *The Rise and Splendour of the Chinese Empire*, p. 77, and Needham, *Science and Civilization in China*, Vol. I, p. 181.

India and China, progressing in different directions during this epoch, were brought nearer by the vehicle of Buddhism. The Han rulers were 'religious innovators' and 'were prepared to welcome a new deity'.<sup>15</sup> Emperor Ming-ti of the Han dynasty, who was instrumental to the political expansion of the Chinese empire, was also responsible for sending missions in search of Buddhist monks.<sup>16</sup> A number of Buddhists of the Central Asian region began frequenting China for the propagation of Buddhism, and a centre of Buddhist community grew up at Loyang, the imperial capital of China.<sup>17</sup>

Buddhism, officially introduced into China in the 1st century A. D., remained throughout the Han period a 'curiosity' for the capital and did not exercise any sway either over the masses or the educated classes, who still remained under the grip of Confucianism. But after the collapse of the Han in 220 A. D., its growth was phenomenal. The fall of the Han resulted in political disintegration and 'barbarian' invasions. The strong centralised bureaucratic state built by Han rulers was partitioned into three warring states, with capitals at Loyang (north), Szechwan (west) and Nanking (south). This was followed by barbaric invasions of the Huns and Mongols of the north-west. The imperial policy of holding the northern barbarians by the strength of military power acted as a boomerang. The barbarians not only invaded but occupied and ravaged the whole of Northern China.<sup>18</sup> It was under these conditions that Buddhism in its Mahāyāna form made rapid progress. It was natural for those who were under stress and strain to turn to external solace. There was nothing in the mundane Confucian doctrines to offer comfort to the

15 Fitzgerald, *China*, p. 274.

16 Bagchi, *India and China*, pp. 6-7.

17 Rene Grousset, *op. cit.*, p. 87.

18 *Ibid*, pp. 107 ff., and McGovern, *op. cit.*, pp. 325 ff.

troubled Chinese mind, and it instinctively turned to Mahāyāna Buddhism which gave abundant and personal solace through its Bodhisattvas.

This growth of Buddhism in China during the 3rd and 4th centuries occurred generally in Northern China and particularly in the provinces of Kansu and Shensi (birth place of Fa-hien) adjacent to the trade routes of Central Asia from where Buddhism first made its entry into China. The chiefs of the Tartars who held sway in Northern China encouraged it in an effort of stifle Confucianism, the state religion of the Han rulers, who were the hated foes of all Tartars. Such was the progress of Buddhism that a major section of the population of Northern China were under its influence.<sup>19</sup> Barring a minor section of hard-boiled Confucian scholars, even the intellectuals of Northern China took to Buddhist ascetic orders and attempted to prepare, in Chinese, an authoritative digest of the new faith.<sup>20</sup> Fa-hien and his followers undertook a voyage to India in order to remedy 'the imperfect state of Buddhist disciplines of China'.

The preceding narrative leads to the following conclusions :

(1) Kaṇṣka of the Kuṣāṇa dynasty was responsible for the spread of Buddhism to the frontiers of China.

(2) The impact of Buddhism on the Chinese mind is traceable to the conditions resulting from political confusion, barbarian invasions and the internal strife prevailing in China during the 3rd and 4th centuries A. D.

(3) The Indians were mainly responsible for the development of the sea-route between India and China while the land-route was to a large extent developed by the Chinese.

19 See Fitzgerald, *China*, p. 276.

20 See Reischauer and Fairbank, *op. cit.*, pp. 146-47.

## Some Foreign Settlements in Uttarapatha

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It is a common practice with the conquerors to found cities with a view to commemorating their names and achievements. Colonies were also implanted amidst the conquered peoples for various reasons such as the thwarting of hostile activities of the subdued population and maintaining an administrative control over the subjugated territory. The establishment of colonies often became necessary to settle the surplus population of the mother country. The Achaemenian emperors pursued a policy of transplanting the people of one area to another with the result that several settlements of foreign people grew up in the north-western parts of India.<sup>1</sup> The historians of Alexander speak of a city-state called Nysa (see No. 21 below) which was founded by a Greek conqueror and his followers long before his invasion. The *Majjhima Nikāya*<sup>2</sup> refers to a Yona state as flourishing along with Kamboja in the time of Gautama the Buddha and Assalāyana. It is quite likely that there were different Greek settlements in India prior to Alexander, established by those Greeks who worked under the Achaemenian emperors in various capacities. Alexander the Great, in course of his expedition, founded several cities after his own name in Afghanistan and West Pakistan. References to some cities

1 See Holdich, *Gates of India*, pp. 20 ff.

2 II. 149. The name *Yona* or *Yavana* was derived from the old Persian form *Yauna*, signifying originally the Ionian Greeks, but, later, all people of Greek nationality (*AIU*, p. 101)

founded by the Bactrian Greeks, Scythians, Kuṣāṇas and Hūṇas are also known. Some such cities are enumerated below.

1. *Alexandria among the Arachosians*—The city was founded at the site of Kandahar in Southern Afghanistan at a point commanding the road to the Kabul valley. A body of Greeks remained in command of this strategic city. The name Kandahar is a corruption of *Alexandria* and has nothing to do with Gandhāra as is sometimes believed.<sup>3</sup>

2. *Alexandria under the Caucasus*—It was founded at the foot of the Hindu Kush whence three roads to Bactria radiated.<sup>4</sup> The city is identified with the extensive ruins at Opian (*Hu-pi-na* of Hiuen-tsang) near Charikar, about thirty miles north of Kabul.<sup>5</sup> Bunbury, however, prefers to place it between Charikar and Begram.<sup>6</sup>

3. *Alexandria at the Confluence of the Chenab and the Indus*—The foundation of this city is known from Arrian.<sup>7</sup> Commenting on the selection of the site, Bevan writes that Alexander foresaw the importance of the place in the age to come.<sup>8</sup>

4. *Alexandria below the Confluence of the Punjab Rivers*—It was called Sogdian or Sodrian Alexandria. The name Sogdi or Sodrai is the Greek form of the name of the Śūdra people who inhabited the place.<sup>9</sup>

5. *Citadel and Harbour at Patala*—Alexander ordered the construction of a citadel and a harbour at the capital of

3 *AIU*, p. 102, note 2; Bunbury, *Hist. Anc. Geogr.*, pp. 488 f.; cf. Rhys Davids, *Buddhist India*, p. 15.

4 *CHI*, Vol. I, p. 311.

5 *EHI*, 1924, p. 52, note 37.

6 Bunbury, *op. cit.*, pp. 490 f.

7 *Anab.*, VI. xv.

8 *CHI*, Vol. I, p. 337.

9 *Ibid.*, p. 338.

Patalene, at the place where two mouths of the Indus bifurcated at that time.<sup>10</sup> V. A. Smith locates Patala at Bahmanābād, while Holdich locates it about thirty miles south-east of Hyderābād.<sup>11</sup>

6. *Alasanda* (Alexandria)—Sailing down the western branch of the Indus, Nearchus came to anchor in a well-sheltered harbour which he designated as 'Alexander's Haven'. The harbour was protected by an island off from the mouth of the river.<sup>12</sup> V. A. Smith proposes to place it near modern Karachi.<sup>13</sup> The geographical position thus indicated makes Alexander's Haven to be identical with Barbaricum of the *Periplus*<sup>14</sup> and Barbarei of Ptolemy.<sup>15</sup> Alexander's Haven was probably called Alasanda by the Indians. In the Alasanda-dvīpa was situated Kalasīgrāma, the birth place of Milinda (Menander).<sup>16</sup> The position of Alasanda is much disputed. While some scholars identify it with Alexandria-under-the Caucasus,<sup>17</sup> S. Lévi thinks it to be identical with Alexandria in Egypt. Sircar, however, locates it in the lower Indus Delta in or about the place where Alexander's Haven stood. Kalasīgrāma being an Indian name, it is logical to look for the city in India than in Egypt. The *Milindapañha* locates Alasanda near the sea.<sup>18</sup> Barbaricum or Barbarei is doubtless associated with the Vārvaras or Barbaras whom Indian literature locates in the north-west. The *Raghuvamśa* of Kālidāsa, assigned to the Gupta period, also speaks of the settlement

10 *Anab.*, VI. xviii.

11 *EHI*, p. 108 ; *CHI*, Vol. I, p. 309.

12 *The Voyage of Nearchus in the Erythraean Sea*, VII. xxi.

13 *EHI*, pp. 110-11.

14 Section 38.

15 VII. i. 59.

16 *Milindapañha*, ed. Trenckner, pp. 82-83.

17 *Op. cit.*, p. 359.

18 See *JIH*, Vol. XLIII, pp. 343 ff.

of Yavanas (Greeks) in the lower delta of the Indus. All these facts go to substantiate the contention of Sircar as noted above.

7. *Dattāmitrī*—It was a city of the Lower Indus Valley named after Demetrius, the Indo-Greek king who probably held sway over considerable parts of the Uttarāpatha and Aparānta Divisions of India. In the Ādi-parvan of the *Mahābhārata*,<sup>19</sup> Dattāmitra is described as the king of Sauvīra. In the *Māhābhāṣya* of Patañjali and Kramadīśvara's Vyākaraṇa, Dattāmitrī is said to be a city of Sauvīra (Lower Indus Valley to the east of the river).<sup>20</sup> Sircar points out that the city was probably situated in the vicinity of Patala, and that the people were often referred to in Indian literary and epigraphic texts as *Dattāmitriyaka*.<sup>21</sup>

8. *Eucratidia*—It was a town of Bactriana mentioned by Ptolemy<sup>22</sup> and was apparently named after the Indo-Greek ruler Eucratides.

9. *Euthymedia*—It is mentioned by Ptolemy who regards it as another name of Sagala (Śākala, Sialkot).<sup>23</sup> Euthymedia is supposed to be a mistake for *Euthydemia* named after Euthydemus, the father of Demetrius. Menander (Milinda) ruled at Śākala, according to the Indian Buddhist tradition. There is a controversy over the identification of Euthymedia or Euthydemia with Śākala.<sup>24</sup>

10. *Huṣkapura*—It is said to have been founded by Huṣka or Huviṣka in Kashmir. Hiuen-tsang, who entered the Kashmir valley from the west by the stone-gate, halted at the

19 I. 139. 21-23.

20 See *PHAI* (6th ed.), p. 385 ; S. Chattopadhyay, *EHNI*, p. 13.

21 *AIU*, p. 107, note 4.

22 IV. 11. 18.

23 VII. 1. 46.

24 See *CHI*, Vol. I, pp. 400-01 ; *AIU*, p. 108.



monastery of *Hu-si-kia*.<sup>25</sup> Al-Bīrūnī calls it Ushkārā.<sup>26</sup> The city has been located by Cunningham at the modern village of Uşkur, two miles to the south-east of the present town of Barāmūlā.<sup>27</sup>

11. *Juṣkapura*—It was founded by Juṣka (Vajheṣka, Vāsiṣka). The Brāhmaṇas of Kashmir, writes Cunningham, identify the place with Zukru or Zukur, a village four miles to the north of the capital, Śrīnagar.<sup>28</sup> Amongst the antiquities of the place, a considerable number of stone pillars and mouldings of the style of architecture peculiar to Kashmir have been found in the tombs of the Muhammadans.

12. *Kaṇiṣkapura*—It was a city founded by Kaṇiṣka in the Kashmir valley. Stein identifies it with the village of Kanespur situated between the Vitastā and the high road leading from Barāmūlā to Śrīnagar.<sup>29</sup>

13. *Mihirapura*—It was probably founded by the Hūṇa king Mihirakula. It belonged to the Halada viṣaya of the Maḍava-rājya,<sup>30</sup> although the exact location of the town has not yet been ascertained.

14. *Minnagara*—From the account of the *Periplus*, it appears that there were two cities of the same name in India—one in the Indus valley and the other in Western India (Ariaca or Aparānta). The *Periplus* (Section 38) mentions a Minnagara as the metropolis of Scythia (Indo-Scythia, i.e. the lower Indus Delta), while elsewhere (Section 41) it refers to another Minnagara which was the capital of Mambarus, probably a Śaka Satrap under the Kuṣāṇas of Kaṇiṣka's house,

25 Beal, *Life of Hiuen Tsiang*, p. 68.

26 See Sircar, *Cosm. and Geogr.*, p. 158.

27 AGI, p. 85.

28 Loc. cit.

29 RT, I. 168.

30 Ibid., I. 306.

whose kingdom appears to have comprised Kathiawar, Gujarat and parts of Rajasthan.<sup>31</sup> Ptolemy places it in the country of Larike (Lāṭa in Western India near the coast), near Oze'ne' (Ujjayinī).<sup>32</sup> The name Minnagara seems to have been usually applied by the Scythians to their chief cities.

15-16. *Cartana and Cadrusi*—two small Greek settlements established by Alexander.<sup>33</sup> Cunningham identifies Cartana with Begram and Cadrusi with Koratas under the hills of Kohistan, six miles north-west of Begram and on the northern bank of the Panjshir river.<sup>34</sup>

17. *Bucephala (Alexandria)*—It was founded by Alexander at the place where he was crossing the river Hydaspes (Jhelum), in order to commemorate the death of his charger. Cunningham located it at Dilwar opposite Jalālpur; but V.A. Smith prefers to place it at Jhelum. A point in favour of Smith is that Jhelum is situated higher up than Jalālpur, and Alexander seems to have kept close to the hills.<sup>35</sup>

18. *Nicaia (No. 1)*—The city is located by V. A. Smith to the west of modern Jalālabād, on the road from Kabul to India,<sup>36</sup> while Cunningham places it near Kabul.<sup>37</sup> But the opinions of Smith and Cunningham seem to be invalidated by Arrian who expressly says that, arriving at the city of Nicaia, Alexander advanced towards the Cophen (Kabul), sending a herald forward to Taxila. Bevan, therefore, prefers to place the city between Alexandria and the Kabul river.<sup>38</sup>

31 Cf. Sircar, *op. cit.*, p. 112; *AIU*, p. 178.

32 VII. 1. 63.

33 Diod., XVII. 83; Curt., VII. 3. 23.

34 *AGI*, pp. 26-27.

35 *Op. cit.*, p. 149; Majumdar Sastri, *CAGI*, p. 685.

36 *Op. cit.*, p. 52, note 1.

37 *AGI*, pp. 24 ff.; cf. Holdich, *op. cit.*, p. 98.

38 *CHI*, Vol. I, p. 312, note 3.

19. *Nicaia* (No. 2)—This city founded on the eastern bank of the Jhelum in the locality where the battle between the rival armies of Alexander and Porus took place.<sup>39</sup> Cunningham locates it at Mong,<sup>40</sup> while Smith prefers the village of Sukhchainpur.<sup>41</sup>

20. *Rhambacia*—According to Arrian,<sup>42</sup> it was a village in the territory of the Oreitai, which is described as the limit of India. Alexander proceeded towards Gedrosia (Baluchistan) leaving Hepaistion behind to build a city and set up a colony of the Greeks at Rhambacia.

21. *Nysa*—It was a small city-state which lay at the foot of Mt. Meros between the Kabul river and the Indus.<sup>43</sup> According to Holdich, in the lower spurs and valleys of the Kohi-Mor in the Swat country, the ancient city of Nysa once stood.<sup>44</sup> M. de St. Martin locates it at the present village of Nysatia, near the northern bank of the river Kabul at less than two leagues below Hashtnagar.<sup>45</sup> This Greek settlement existed before the time of Alexander as we have already noted.

39 *Anab.*, V. xix.

40 *Op. cit.*, p. 204.

41 *Loc. cit.*

42 *Anab.*, VI. xxi.

43 *Ibid.*, VI. i-ii. The city is alleged to have been founded by the soldiers of Dionysius. Cf. McCrindle, *Invasion of India by Alexander*, p. 79.

44 *EHI*, p. 57; *CHI*, Vol. I, p. 353.

45 See B. M. Barua, *Aśoka and his Inscriptions*, pp. 97-98.

## VI

### Foreign Influence on a Bishnupur Terracotta Panel

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Recently I had an occasion to visit the temple town of Bishnupur in the Bankura District, West Bengal. The temples located there are famous for their rich terracottas. The subject matter of these terracottas are mainly the story of the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the life of Kṛṣṇa. In addition, panels depicting the then feudal society, and Europeans attended by their native servants are also found to embellish the temples. Sometimes beautiful friezes of swans and elephants in different moods and actions recall similar friezes at Konarak, Belur and Somnath.

In the Jorbāṅglā temple, there is an interesting frieze whose parallel is hardly to be found elsewhere. It shows fleeing deer closely followed by tigers. Here and there in this panel the tigers are seen overpowering their unfortunate victims. The scene speaks of such brute force that it cannot fit in the context in which the dominant note is an intense love of nature. Indeed, Indian artists always endeavoured to reach a plane where they could realise Nature itself in themselves and every natural phenomenon as the manifestation of their own selves. In this approach, there is no place of physical strength or violence. Calm and quiet contemplation raising our level of reverence from the empirical to the ideal, from observation to vision, from an auditory sensation to audition decides what Indian art should be. Such an attitude cannot accommodate a theme like the present one. It seems to be essentially alien in its origin and inspiration. It may either have come through the Mughuls whose art was largely influenced by Persia or through the European settlers in India.

## VII

### The Tukhāras in Ancient India

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Among the foreign tribes mentioned in Indian literature, we do not find reference to the Kuṣāṇas who are known from inscriptions and coins. But side by side with the Śakas and the Yavanas, we find mention of the Tuṣāras (or Tukhāras) in the Purāṇas, e.g., the *Matsya*, *Vāyu* and *Brahmāṇḍa*.<sup>1</sup> It is said that the Tuṣāra kings, 14 in number, succeeded the Yavanas in India and ruled for 105 years<sup>2</sup> (*pañca-varṣa-jatāni* — *Vāyu* and *Brahmāṇḍa*; *sapta-varṣa-sahasrāṇi* — *Matsya*). In the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*, the Tuṣāras are mentioned immediately after the Cīnas as a populous race of foreigners. They are mentioned as Tukhāra in the *Kiṣkindhyā-kāṇḍa* (LXIV. 15) of the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Sabhā-parvan* (L. 1850) of the *Mahābhārata*. Again we find the name of the Tuṣāras in the *Vana-parvan* (LI. 1991) and the *Śānti-parvan* (LXV. 2429) of the *Mahābhārata*. The two names, Tuṣāra and Tukhāra, seem to mean the same people. In the *Harivaṃśa* (CXV. 6440-42), they are classed along with the Śakas, Daradas, Pahlavas, etc., and are considered to be Mlecchas and Dasyus. The Tukhāras were a foreign northern race living near the Himalayas, as it is known from the *Vana-parvan* (CIXXVII. 12350) of the *Mahābhārata*. The *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, in its classification of the Northern peoples, places the Tuṣāras in the

1 Pargiter, *Purana Text of the Dynasties of the Kali Age*, pp. 45-47, 72.

2 P. C. Bagchi, *India and Central Asia*, pp. 127 ff.; for the references we are indebted to McCrindle's *Ancient India as described by Ptolemy*, ed. S. N. Majumdar Sastri, p. 394, and B. N. Puri, *India under the Kuṣāṇas*, p. 11, note 37.

north-west.<sup>3</sup> The people, named as Tukhāra, finds mention in the two Buddhist texts, viz. *Saddharmasmṛtyupasthāna* and *Mahāmāyūrī*. Bāṇabhaṭṭa's *Harṣacarita* informs us that Harṣa used to get taxes from the mountainous and inaccessible region of the Tuṣāras. Thus the Tukhāras were known to the Indians up to at least the 7th century A. D., as having been settled in a region beyond the Himalayas.

The Tukhāras referred to in Indian literature so often are identified with the Tochari mentioned by Pliny who places them after the Attacores (i.e. the Uttara-Kurus) and before Casiri (i.e. Caspiri or Kashmir). Ptolemy<sup>4</sup> mentions the Tocharoi among the tribes which inhabited different parts of Bactria watered by the river Oxus. According to P. C. Bagchi, the Ta-hia of the Han annals was pronounced in early times as Daa(t)-ga and stood in all probability for the Dogas or Tukhāra which appears in the Chinese annals from the 5th century as Tu-ho-lo. Beal also connects the name of the Tocharoi with Tu-ho-lo, the name of a country or kingdom called Tukhāra frequently mentioned by Hiuen-tsang.<sup>5</sup> Tokharistan or the country of the Tukhāras, in the time of Hiuen-tsang, was bounded by the Tsong-ling (Pamirs) on the east, Persia on the west, the Hindukush on the south and the Iron Pass or Derbend near Badakshan in the north.

The above evidences suggest that the Tukhāras were settled in the valley of the Oxus since very early times and came to overthrow Greek rule. It has been proposed by some scholars<sup>6</sup> to equate them with the Kuṣāṇas who represented the Kuei-shuang, one of the five *hi-hous*, viz. Hiu-mi, Shuang-mi,

3 Bagchi, *ibid.*, p. 119.

4 Majumdar Sastri, *op. cit.*, pp. 273-74.

5 JRAS, N. S., Vol. XVI, p. 253.

6 Bagchi, *India and Central Asia*, pp. 127-33; B. N. Puri, *India under the Kuṣāṇas*, pp. 1-7.

Kuei-shuang, Hi-tun and Tu-mi, known from the annals of the Han dynasty. It is further held that the Tukhāras or the Tocharians were masters of Ta-hia or Bactria, till they were subjugated by the Yue-chi. Later on, they re-asserted themselves, consolidated their position and managed to put their way south-east, where, defeating the last Greek ruler, the Kuṣāṇa chief Kujula Kadphises managed to set up a foot-board for his son's conquest of India. While the Kuṣāṇa rulers do not use the tribal epithet, the Indian sources continue to mention them as Tuṣāra or Tukhāra. Naturally, doubt arises whether the Kuṣāṇas ethnically belonged to the Yue-chi stock or not, though it is clear that they came to India from the country known as Tokharistan.

Sinologists are not unanimous on the interpretation of the evidence of the Han annals regarding the nature of the political relation between Ta-hia and the newly settled Yue-chi. Scholars like Kuwabara Jitzuzo, Karlgren, Konow, Maneda Toru and Paul Pelliot think that the Kuṣāṇas did not belong to the Yue-chi stock; W. W. Tarn, Otto Maenchen Helfen and others hold that they represented the nobility of the Yue-chi kings. While the *Tsien-Han-shu* says that Ta-hia was already divided into five *hi-hous* before the advent of the Yue-chi,\* the *Hou-Han-shu* says that the Yue-chi divided the kingdom of Ta-hia into five *hi-hous*. Some scholars prefer the former evidence to the latter, while others find no reason in rejecting the account given in the *Hou-Han-shu*. No solution probably lies in the evidence of the Han annals. This much is definitely known from the Chinese texts that the Yue-chi settled in Bactria or Ta-hia in the second century B.C., as suggested by Chang Kien's embassy in 128 B.C. reported in Ssu-ma-Chien's *Shi-ki*.

\* [ But all the five are stated to have been Ta Yue-chi subjects.—Ed. ]

The Classical authors who have referred to the conquest of Bactria by some Central Asian tribes do not help us much in determining the nationality of the Kuṣāṇas. Strabo states that 'the best known tribes [of the Scythians] are those who deprived the Greeks of Bactriana, the Asii, Pasiani, Tochari and Sacarauili, who came from the country beyond the Jaxartes'.<sup>7</sup> According to most of the modern scholars, Strabo, in this statement, simply refers to the Śaka occupation of Bactria. But it should be remembered that the Śakas were in occupation of Bactria long before the advent of the Greeks. The Śakā Tigrakhaudā, mentioned in the Naqshi Rustum inscription<sup>8</sup> of Darius (522-486 B.C.), were, according to Herodotus, the neighbours of the Bactrians. Therefore it seems that, in the second century B. C., Greek rule in Bactria was overthrown by the Yue-chi and not by the Śakas. In Strabo's statement one is to find out reference to the conquest of Bactria by the Yue-chi.<sup>9</sup> It is significant that, in the dynastic lists in the Purāṇas, the Śakas are followed by the Yavanas after whom come the Tuṣāras. It is learnt from Strabo's account that the Tochari, identified with the Tukhāras of Indian writers, came from the country beyond the Jaxartes. In the 42nd book of Trogus, there is an information relating to the Asiani (probably Pasiani of Strabo) becoming kings of the Tocharians and the annihilation of the Saraucae (probably the Sacarauili of Strabo) who represented the last remnants of the Śaka power in Bactria.

Indian texts referring to the Tukhāras, mainly the epics and the Purāṇas, cannot be dated before the second century B.C.

7 Strabo, *Geography*, XI. 8. 2.

8 Sircar, *Select Inscriptions*, pp. 10-11. ['Neighbours of the Bactrians' does 'not mean' 'in occupation of Bactria'.—Ed.]

9 Rahul Sankrityayan, *History of Central Asia*, Pt. I, p. 100; Tarn, *Greeks in Bactria and India*, p. 280.



It is known that the *Rāmāyaṇa*, the *Mahābhārata* and the *Purāṇas*, as we find them in their present form, were the products of the early centuries of the Christian era,<sup>10</sup> though their beginning might be traced further back. Besides, the chances of information being interpolated in those texts are always recognised. In the *Purāṇas*, the names of kings reigning from the 4th century B.C. to the 4th century A.D. are incorporated. The Sanskrit Buddhist texts mentioning the different peoples of the north were not produced much before the beginning of the Christian era. The *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* was undoubtedly composed in the sixth century A.D. Therefore, any mention of the Tukhāras in these texts does not indicate that they had been settled in Ta-hia or Bactria even before it was conquered by the Yue-chi in the second century B.C.

The Tochari, of which the ruling class was represented by the Asii or Asiani, is probably to be identified with the Yue-chi. In the Chinese translations of Sanskrit works, *Tukhāra* is transcribed as *Tu-ho-lo* and translated as Yue-chi. For instance, in a list of languages translated into Chinese in 431 A.D., Guṇavarman substituted the name of the Yue-chi for *Tukhāra*, and in his translation of the great commentary of the *Prajñāpāramitā* (*Ta-che-lu-luen*), Kumārajīva transcribed this word as *Ta-kia-lo* and explained it as Siao-Yue-chi.<sup>11</sup> In the Chinese translation of the *Saṃyuktāgama*, made between 435 and 443 A.D.,<sup>12</sup> this word was transcribed as *Teou-sha-lo* which presupposes the form *Tuṣāra*. It is noteworthy that even Pelliot, who distinguishes the Kuei-shuang from the Yue-chi, holds that the Tokhri of the Uigür colopons is the Tocharian which Hiuen tsang found in 'Tokharistan' and 'Kusan' of the

10 Winternitz, *History of Indian Literature*, Vol. I, p. 465, foot-notes.

11 Sylvain Le'vi, *Fragments de textes Kouitcheans*, pp. 24-25.

12 Pelliot, *JA*, 1934, p. 34.

same colophons is the language of Kucha and that both these languages belong to one family. H. W. Bailey identifies 'Taūgara' with an important city in Kansu on the silk-route mentioned in the itinerary of Maes Titianos. He finds in it the name of the Tokharians, 'Toghara-Tokhara', an indigenous name of the people who are later known in Bactria under the name Tokhar. Their history coincides with that attributed by the Chinese historians to the Ta-Yue-chi.<sup>13</sup>

Most probably, the Purāṇas and the epics or other Indian literary texts referring to the Tuṣāras (men of the snowy lands) or the Tukhāras (people speaking a Tokhari language) meant the Kuṣāṇas (that is, *Kuṣa* + *āṇa*, a genitive plural suffix). Otto Maenchen Helfen tries to prove that the term 'Yue-chi' found in the Chinese texts is another Chinese transcription of 'Kuṣa', equated with the Tochari of the Classical authors.<sup>14</sup> Two branches of the Tokhari language have been found in Central Asia, of which one was the language of Karashahr and the other of Kucha. The second was most probably connected with the Kuṣāṇas. Sten Konow has tried to show that the language of the legends found on Kuṣāṇa coinage is Khotani Śaka. This was probably due to the influence of the Śakas with whom the Kuṣāṇas had contact for long.

13 *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, Vol. VIII (1937), p. 34.

14 *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 1945, pp. 71-81.

## VIII

### Decline of the Kusānas in India — The Murundas

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Numismatic and epigraphic evidences examined and interpreted by scholars have shown that, in the beginning of the third century A. D., the Yaudheyas, Kuṇindas, Madras and Ārjunāyanas, republican tribes settled in different parts of the Punjab and Rajasthan, and the Nāgas of Mathurā, Padmāvati, and Kāntipuri, and also the Maghas of Kauśāmbī carved out their independent kingdoms on the ruins of the Kuṣāṇa empire.<sup>1</sup> Most of these territories came under the suzerainty of the Gupta monarchs, as is evidenced by the Allahabad pillar inscription of Samudragupta. The foreign potentates owing allegiance to the Gupta lord included the Daivaputra-Śāhi Śāhānuṣāhi-Śāka-Murunda.<sup>2</sup> But the rise of the Guptas in Eastern India was not an event unchallenged by the foreigners who had so long held their sway over Northern India.

A. D. H. Bivar<sup>3</sup> thinks that the successors of Vāsudeva I (i. e. the Later Kuṣāṇas, the Murunda according to Bivar) maintained a precarious sway as independent of the old Kuṣāṇa dynasty in the third and fourth centuries A. D. to this side of the Indus, for the Sassanian conquest of India is shown to have extended no further than the Indus by the inscription of Shāpur I at Persepolis. According to him, Daivaputra-Śāhi-Śāhānuṣāhi-Śāka-Murunda in the Allahabad pillar inscription indicates a single group and refers to Samudragupta's overthrow of the ruler (lord, i. e. Murunda) of a Śāka-Kuṣāṇa

1 *The Mauryas and Śātavāhanas*, ed. K. A. N. Sastri, pp. 355-62.

2 Fleet, *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, Vol. III, pp. 6 ff.

3 *Journal of the Numismatic Society of India*, Vol. XVIII, 1956, Pt. I, pp. 37 ff.

empire with the characteristic titles used by the emperors of the Kuṣāṇa dynasty. The objections to this view are the following.

(1) While *Daivaputra-Śāhi-Śāhānuśāhi* indicates the lord (*Śāhānuśāhi*) of the Kuṣāṇa kings (*Devaputra-Śāhi*), *Śakamurunda* refers to the Śaka lords.<sup>4</sup> There is no evidence to show that the Kuṣāṇa monarchs, in the period of their decline, united the territories held by the Śakas with their own.

(2) The sway of the Later Kuṣāṇas (Murundas) to the east of the Indus, however precarious it might be, for a century after Shāpur I's contests in the Indus Valley, is not attested by the findspots of their coins. Their coins of the Oesho type belong to the Kabul valley, while those of the Ardokhsho type belong to the eastern portion of the Kuṣāṇa dominions.<sup>5</sup>

(3) The Wei-liao, which records the events upto the reign of the emperor Ming (227-39 A. D.), remarks that the kingdom of Ki-pin, the kingdom of Ta-hia, the kingdom of Kao-fu and the kingdom of Tien-chou were subservient to the Ta Yue-chi.<sup>6</sup> Tien-chou, i.e. the Indian dominions of the Kuṣāṇas, could not have crossed the eastern frontiers of the Indus valley in view of the rise of a number of independent republican and monarchical states in the third century A. D. as referred to above. The epigraphic records of the time of Huiṣka and Vāsudeva I found in and around Mathurā<sup>7</sup> prove that the Kuṣāṇa dominions in India were within the western part of Uttar Pradesh. The advent of the Nāga rulers in Mathurā, probably in the third century A. D., brought an end to the Kuṣāṇa rule in the valley of the Yamunā.

4 D. C. Sircar, *Select Inscriptions*, p. 258, note 2.

5 Rapson, *Indian Coins*, p. 19.

6 Chavannes, *T'oung Pao*, 1905, pp. 519-71.

7 Puri, *India under the Kuṣāṇas*, Appendix A, pp. 229 ff.

(4) While the realms of the Śākas, Śilādas and Gaḍaharas, the three Scythian houses that held sway in the Punjab, shrank to negligible proportions as a result of the pressure of the Indian peoples, the Kuṣāṇa possessions in Bactria, Afghanistan and the trans-Indus region were blighted by the attacks of Ardashir I (224-41 A. D.) and Shāpur I (241-272 A. D.). According to Tabarī, the Kuṣāṇa king sent ambassadors to Ardashir and acknowledged his suzerainty.<sup>8</sup> Shāpur I enumerates in his Kaaba Zarathushtra inscription Turan, Makran, Paratan, Hindustan and Kushanshahr as parts of his empire with its frontiers reaching up to Pushkabur (Peshawar) in the south and extending upto Bukhara, Sogdiana and Tashkent (Kas, Sugd and Sasstan).<sup>9</sup> The later Kuṣāṇa kings, Kaṇiṣka III and Vāsudeva II, could not exercise sovereignty over their shrunken dominions for a long period after Shāpur I's conquests.

(5) There is nothing to suggest that the Kuṣāṇas were ever called Muruṇḍa. Bivar, following Sten Konow, suggests that the title *Muruṇḍa* appears along with the name of Kaṇiṣka in the Zeda inscription. But the reading is not unanimously accepted. Cunningham reads *Kharaḍasa*, Senart *casa*, Boyer *Mucasa*, Lüders *Verodasa*, and Majumdar *Bemaḍasa*.<sup>10</sup> Even if we accept Konow's reading, this much can be said that Kaṇiṣka mentioned in the Zeda inscription of the year 11 held the title *Muroḍa* (i.e. Muruṇḍa) after he had conquered the Muruṇḍas.

Muruṇḍa is a tribal name<sup>11</sup> representing a ruling dynasty in the Purāṇas. They followed the Tukhāras (i.e. Tocharians of

8 Herzfeld, *Paikuli*, Vol I, pp. 36, 48 ; *Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India*, No. 38, p. 32.

9 Sprengling, 'Shahpuhr I the Great on the Kaabah of Zoroaster', *American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literature*, 1940, pp. 353-58.

10 D. C. Sircar, *Select Inscriptions*, p. 137, note 2.

11 D. C. Sircar, *Indian Epigraphical Glossary*, p. 207.

the Classical writers) and thirteen of their kings ruled along with low-caste people of Mleccha origin. The duration of their rule was 350 years according to the *Vāyu* and *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇas*, while, according to the *Viṣṇu* and *Bhaviṣya Purāṇas*, it was 199 years.<sup>12</sup> The Muruṇḍas also find mention in the *Mahābhārata* (Sabhā. XXIX. 1081.82 ; Droṇa. VII. 183) and the *Rāmāyaṇa*. In the latter epic, it is stated that they were originally occupying the Shahabad District, but were dislodged from that place by the demoness Tāḍakā and migrated eastward.<sup>13</sup> Hemacandra in his *Abhidhānacintāmaṇi* connects the Muruṇḍas with Lampāka (Lamghan). He probably got this information from some older source. This information may suggest that the Muruṇḍas came by way of Lamghan. The *Prabandhacintāmaṇi* of Merutuṅga tells us that the Muruṇḍa-rāja had his capital at Pāṭaliputra. The *Bṛhatkalpavṛtti* of the Jainas, as quoted in the *Abhidhānarājendra* (II. 726), refers to a Muruṇḍa king of Pāṭaliputra.<sup>14</sup>

It has been said that a people called Phrynoi living near the Tochari is mentioned by the Classical writers like Strabo, Pliny and Periegetes, and that the name Phrynoi, rendered in Sanskrit, would become Mruṇḍa or Muruṇḍa.<sup>15</sup> Ptolemy's Geography (VII. 2. 14) mentions the Maroundai who occupied an extensive territory comprising 'Tirhut and the country southward on the east of the Ganges, as far as the head of the delta, where they bordered with the Gangaridae.'<sup>16</sup>

12 Pargiter, *Purāṇa Text of the Dynasties of the Kali Age*, pp. 44-47, 72(note 17), 81.

13 McCrindle's *Ancient India as described by Ptolemy*, ed. S.N. Majumdar Sastri, p. 390.

14 *Indian Antiquary*, 1918, p. 298.

15 P. C. Bagchi, *India and Central Asia*, p. 135.

16 Majumdar Sastri, *op. cit.*, p. 212.

Sylvain Lévi<sup>17</sup> dealt with the Chinese annals preserving an account of the Murunda king ruling in the 3rd century A. D. It is recorded that a political mission was sent to India from the Hinduised kingdom of Fu-nan in Indo-China. In the period 222-29 A. D., the ambassador started from Fu-nan, went out of the mouth of the river Tu-kiu-li and following the great bend of the littoral right towards the north-west entered a big gulf bordering on different kingdoms. At the end of a little more than a year, he entered the mouth of the river of Tien-chu. He went up this river, covered a distance of about 700 li and arrived at the court of the Indian king with the title Mou-lun, i.e. Murunda. The Indian king sent ambassadors with various presents to the king of Fu-nan and, amongst them, there were four horses of the Yue-chi country. The Indian ambassadors met with a Chinese mission at the Funanese court. Being asked by the latter, the Indians spoke about their king and his capital. The description of the city and the place as given by them probably indicates the splendour of Pataliputra.

The evidence of Ptolemy's Geography and the Chinese texts proves beyond doubt the existence of a line of Murunda kings in Eastern India in the 2nd and 3rd centuries A. D., probably with their capital at Pataliputra. The Murundas referred to in the Allahabad pillar inscription may be identified with the Murundas of Eastern India.<sup>18</sup> The Murundas, associated with the Tochari by the Classical writers and with the Yue-chi by the Chinese, are to be distinguished from the Śakas. The Khoh copper-plate inscriptions (6th century A. D.) inform us that the mother of Mahārāja Sarvanātha of Uccakalpa was

17 *Melanges Charles des Harlez*, pp. 176-85; cf. Konow, *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, Vol. II, Part I, p. xxi.

18 Bagchi, *op. cit.*, p. 133.

Murundadevī, also called Murundasvāminī.<sup>19</sup> Probably she was a princess of the Muruṇḍa dynasty.

Mention may be made of a unique gold coin found in course of the excavations at Śīsupālgadh in Orissa, bearing on the obverse the Kuṣāṇa motif: king standing along with the legend in Brāhmī characters of the 3rd century A. D.—*Mahārāja-rājadhasa-Dharmadamadharasa* (of Dharmadamadhara, great king, king of kings) and a Roman head with a Roman legend on the reverse. Altekar describes the issuer of the coin as a Muruṇḍa king.<sup>20</sup> If this attribution be accepted, it would not be unreasonable to suppose that the early Orissan coins,<sup>21</sup> found in Mayurbhanj and Keonjhar and also in Singbhum, were issued by the Muruṇḍas in imitation of the Kuṣāṇa coinage. Those coins bearing on the obverse—king standing and sacrificing at an altar and the deities like Mao, Mihira, Oado, etc., on the reverse, probably constituted the currency of the Muruṇḍas who, being ousted by the Guptas from Magadha, took shelter in Singbhum and Manbhum and, further pressed, receded to the eastern fringes of the Vindhya.

We have considerable evidence to show that in the early centuries of the Christian era, the Muruṇḍa kingdom was a powerful one covering the greater part of the Ganges Valley.<sup>22</sup> In the heyday of the Kuṣāṇa empire, when Kanīška I launched his military campaigns, according to Tibetan tradition, up to Sāketa and Pāṭaliputra, the Muruṇḍas had to yield to their superior power. In the third decade of the second century A.D. when the Kuṣāṇa empire in India was confined within Western U. P., the Muruṇḍas asserted their independence. Their long-continued contact with the Kuṣāṇas is attested by

19 Fleet, *loc. cit.*; Sircar, *Select Inscriptions*, p. 371, note 2.

20 *Journal of the Numismatic Society of India*, Vol. XII, 1950, pp. 1-4.

21 *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 126.

22 Allan, *Catalogue (Gupta)*, p. xxix.



numismatic affinities. They lost their independence after the rise of the Guptas. The Muruṇḍas, at least partially, fill up the gap in the political history of India from the decline of the Kuṣāṇas to the rise of the Guptas. It has been observed that, if the Gupta rulers imitated the coinage of the Kuṣāṇas both in type and weight,<sup>23</sup> the gap between the last ruler of the earlier dynasty and the founder of the later one must not be long.<sup>24</sup> But it is quite reasonable to assume that for a century after the downfall of the Kuṣāṇas in India, the Muruṇḍas carried on their numismatic tradition and handed it over to the Guptas simultaneously with the transfer of power in Eastern India.

23 Smith, Catalogue, p. 97 ; Altekar, *The Coinage of the Gupta Empire*, p. 42.

24 Puri, *India under the Kuṣāṇas*, p. 42.

## IX

### Advent of the Magas or Iranian Priests in India

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In spite of the fact that ancient India occupied a unique geographical position of splendid isolation, it had ever been a meeting ground of different races, cultures and peoples. From time immemorial, there had been the pouring of peoples, ideas and traditions in India from different parts of the world. The coming of Iranian priests, known as Maga, to India is one such instance. The advent of the Magas is testified to by Purāṇic literature<sup>1</sup> as well as by inscriptions<sup>2</sup> and iconography.<sup>3</sup> Their advent in ancient India is of singular importance in the socio-religious history of the country as it brought new traditions of priesthood, image-worship and temple-worship and certain changes in the disposal of the dead.

Weber<sup>4</sup> referred to the Magas and, while fixing the period of their advent in the 1st century A. D., opined that, as a result, the native sun-worship was replaced by the Magian sun-worship. R. G. Bhandarkar<sup>5</sup> accepted the view of Weber and added a few details of the legend about the Magas in our literature. Sudhakar Chattopadhyaya,<sup>6</sup> while dealing with the

1 *Bhaviṣya P.*, Ch. 139 ; *Brahma P.*, 20.71 ; *Varāha P.*, Ch. 177 ; *Sāmba Upa-P.*, Ch. 26 ; cf. *Mbh.* VI. 11. 36-38 ; *Viṣṇu P.*, II. 4. 59-70 ; *Bṛhat-saṃhitā* (S. Dwivedi's ed.), 60.19 ; Sachau, *Alberuni's India*, Vol. I, p. 26.

2 Bhandarkar, R. G., *Vaiṣṇavism, Saivism and Minor Religious Systems*, p. 154.

3 Banerjea, J. N., 'Myths Explaining Some Alien Traits of the North Indian Sun Icons', *IHQ*, Vol. XXVIII, 1952.

4 Barth, A., *The Religions of India*, p. 258, note 9.

5 *Op. cit.*, pp. 153-54.

6 *The Achaemenids in India*, pp. 30-31.

Achaemenian invasion, came to the conclusion that the Magas might have come to India during the 6th century B. C. His conclusions were largely based upon controversial literary references and social customs. H. D. Sankalia<sup>7</sup> indicated the probability of the 5th century B. C. as the period for the advent of the Magas in Gujarat without analysing the question in detail. The question of Magas has also been discussed by other scholars,<sup>7</sup> and it is often believed that the Śaka-Kuṣāṇa was the period when the Magas entered into India. However, the Maga problem has to be discussed with reference to the question of antiquity, original home, effects upon Indian socio-religious life, cause of their popularity and absorption in Indian social orders and the low position assigned to them.

The present author has tried to study some of these problems in his thesis on 'Sun Worship in Ancient India'<sup>8</sup> and has come to a number of tentative conclusions in the light of recent literary, epigraphic, iconographic and archaeological researches and studies. Here it is proposed to study in brief only the antiquity of the Magas in India. It appears that they entered India for the first time in the wake of the Achaemenian invasion of the 6th century B.C., though they continued pouring in the interior of India in the wake of later invasions of the Indo-Greeks, Śakas and Kuṣāṇas. Some of the important points<sup>9</sup> may be discussed here.

The evidence for the advent of Magas in the wake of the Achaemenian invasion is circumstantial.<sup>10</sup> They appear, to

7 *Archaeology of Gujarat*, p. 212.

7a Jairajbhoy, R. A., *Foreign Influence in India*, p. 153.

8 Unpublished D. Phil. thesis submitted to Allahabad University in 1968.

9 Cf. Srivastava, V. C., 'The Magas and the Sun-worship', paper read at the All-India Oriental Conference, Aligarh, 1966.

10 Srivastava, V. C., 'Antiquity of Magas in Ancient India,' paper read at the Indian History Congress, Bhagalpur, 1968.

have played a significant part in the Achaemenid empire as teachers, priests and philosophers in the Iranian society and politics.<sup>11</sup> It was a Maga who raised the standard of revolt against the accession of Darius. Moreover, the Mithra cult, whose priests the Magas were, was extremely popular among the military classes of Iran.<sup>12</sup> Further, the close geographical proximity of Iran and India coupled with close commercial and cultural contacts<sup>13</sup> between the two countries from very early times make it probable that the Magas might have entered into India in the 6th century B.C.

In this connection, the testimony of the *Ārṣeya Upaniṣad* is revealing. According to this Upaniṣad,<sup>14</sup> the Daradas, Suhmas, Pundras and Barbaras worship the Sun-god as the ultimate reality. It appears as if some of these tribes were foreigners because *Barbara* was a general expression for foreigners. The date of this Upaniṣad has been fixed by Ranade as quite early because it has been grouped with such ancient Upaniṣads as the *Chāndogya*. If there had been foreigners as Sun-worshippers in Indian society in the 5th or 6th century B. C. as is evidenced by this Upaniṣad, it is possible to think that the Magas were indicated by this general term.\*

Thirdly, the indirect testimony of *Bambhajāla Sutta*,<sup>15</sup> which cannot be dated later than 4th century B.C., is also important. According to this work, magician priests were held in dishonour in the time of the Buddha.\* It is difficult to say

11 Dhalla, M. N., *Zoroastrian Civilization*, p. 242.

12 Cumont, Frank, *The Mysteries of Mithra*, p. 30.

23 *CHI*, Vol. I, p. 331.

14 Belvalker, S. K., and Ranade, R. D., *History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, p. 298.

\*[The present *Ārṣeya Upaniṣad* appears to be a late work.—Ed.]

15 Quoted by Vasu, N. N., *Archaeological Survey of Mayurbhanj*, Vol. I, pp. 10 ff.

\*[The date of the work is problematical. All magicians were not Magians.—Ed.]

whether the magician priests referred to here were of indigenous or foreign origin ; but it may not be forgotten that the Magas were famous for their magic and occult power and were also in disrepute in India on account of their peculiar ways and manners and objectionable practices. It is probable that the author of this work had the Maga Brāhmaṇas in his mind when he refers to magician priests in disrepute in the time of the Buddha.

Fourthly, it has been said in the Purāṇas that the Magas came from Śāka-dvīpa, from which it is supposed that the Magas came in the train of the Śakas. It may be pointed out that there may have been Śaka infiltrations in India before Alexander. There is reference to a group of Sacae in Drangiana in the Achaemenian period.<sup>16</sup> It is also clear from the inscriptions of Darius I that the Śakas existed in his empire.<sup>17</sup> Recently archaeological evidence<sup>18</sup> has been brought to light to prove that, as early as the 6th-5th century B.C., there were contacts between India and Central Asia and therefore with the Śakas also. In these circumstances, it may be that the Magas entered into India during the 6th-5th century B.C.

Fifthly, it is said that the tradition of Sun-worship in temples was introduced into India by the Magas.<sup>19</sup> There are references to Sun temples at Taxila and Hydaspes, in the writings of Greek historians on the eve of Alexander's

16 Thomas, F.W., *JRAS*, 1906, pp. 181 ff.

17 *CHI*, Vol. I, pp. 302-03.

18 Sharma, G. R., 'India's Contact with Western and Central Asia with special reference to the evidence of Kauśāmbī, c. 600 B. C.-500 A.D.', paper read at the International Conference on the Art and Archaeology of Iran, April, 1968 ; Negi, J. S., 'The Śaka-Kuṣāṇas in the Central Gaṅgā Valley', *Kuṣāṇa Studies*, Allahabad, 1960, p. 60.

19 Hazra, R. C., *Studies in the Upapurāṇas*, Vol. I, pp. 29-30.

invasion.<sup>20</sup> If the tradition of Sun-worship in temples was really initiated by the Magas in India, the existence of Sun temples in the 4th century B. C. may be the result of Magian advent before Alexander's invasion.

Sixthly, it may be noted that recent excavations in West Pakistan have brought to light actual specimens of fire altars from Achaemenian levels from Balambat.<sup>21</sup> It is interesting that almost in every room such fire altars have been discovered. There cannot be any doubt that the Iranian religion was popular in this part of ancient India during the Achaemenian period. It is difficult to separate the Iranian religion and the Maga priests. If the religion was there in the Achaemenid territories of India, it is natural to suppose that the Iranian priests were also there, because the Iranians performed their religious sacrifice and worship under the guidance of the Magian priests.<sup>22</sup> This discovery thus proves the antiquity of the Magas in India. It is probable that these specimens of fire altars were the source of inspiration to similar devices on the Sūryamitra-Bhānumitra coins in the Pañcāla-Mitra series,<sup>23</sup> and also to the device of sun and fire on the Gupta seals.<sup>24</sup> It is argued against the theory of the 6th-5th century B. C. as the probable period for the advent of Magas in India that no Sun image with Iranian features of a date earlier than the 1st or 2nd century A. D. have been found. It may be noted that there was no tradition of iconic worship of the Sun in early Mithraism.

20 Cunningham, A., *Coins of the Sakas*, pp. 22 ff.

21 Dani, A. H., *Ancient Pakistan*, Vol. III, p. 41.

22 Herodotus, I. 132. Cf. Moulton, *Early Zoroastrians*, pp. 132-253; *The Treasure of Magi*, pp. 9 ff.

23 Srivastava, V. C., 'Fresh Interpretation of Solar Symbols on Sūryamitra-Bhānumitra Coins', paper read at the 57th Annual Conference of the Numismatic Society of India, Gorakhpur, January, 1966.

24 Spooner, D.B., *ASI, A.R.*, 1913-14, pp. 118-20, 140.

In the beginning, the worship of the Sun was symbolic in Mithraism as is evidenced by sculptures on the tomb of Darius.<sup>25</sup> It was after the Hellenization of Mithraism in the days of the successors of Alexander that the tradition of iconic worship of the Sun was introduced in it. Therefore, it is no surprise if no Sun icon of Iranian tradition is found in India of a date earlier than the 1st century A. D.

It may be argued that there is a complete absence of references to them in the orthodox literature of India before the 4th-5th century A. D. and that, if they were present in the Indian society from the 6th-5th century B. C. onwards, they should have found a place in Indian literature of the earlier period. It may not be forgotten that the date of a religious institution cannot be determined from the date of the work which mentions it first.<sup>26</sup> There are many known instances of religious institutions that they found a place in literature long after the date of their origin. Moreover, the advent of Maga priests in India must have given a rude shock to the established priesthood of India, and the popularity of the Magas must have been at the cost of the Brāhmaṇas who were the custodians of orthodox literature. The Magas indulged in objectionable practices and behaviours. All these must have antagonised the established priesthood which tried to ignore them by not referring to them in the literature or referring to them by such generalised names as Barbara, Yavana, Mleccha, etc. It is interesting to note that Ptolemy (2nd century A. D.)<sup>27</sup> refers to them as established in South India. If unorthodox writers of the 2nd century A. D. find them as living in South India there is every probability that they should have reached India much earlier because first they would have

25 Banerjea, J. N., *Development of Hindu Iconography*, p. 438.

26 ERE, Vol. VI, p. 294 ; Chanda, R. P., *The Indo-Aryan Races*, p. 88.

27 McCrindle, J. W., *Ancient India as described by Ptolemy*, p. 178.

come to the north-west of India and then might have migrated to South India.

The attitude of antipathy continues even upto this day. The Śāka-dvīpī Brāhmaṇas, the descendants of Iranian Magas, are now given a low status in the Indian Brāhmaṇical society.

In view of the above arguments, it is reasonable to suppose that the Magas may have entered into India in the wake of the Achaemenian invasion of the 6th century B.C.\*

\*[ We are sorry that the author's arguments do not appear to us quite convincing. There may have been some Magi priests in the Achaemenian territories in the north-western part of the Indian sub-continent ; but the Maga-Brāhmaṇa community must have been recognised in Indian society long afterwards, apparently after the Magi priests' migration into India in considerable numbers in the train of the Scytho-Parthians.—Ed.]





**PART II**  
**LAKSMĪ AND SARASVATĪ IN ART AND**  
**LITERATURE**



# Proceedings of the Seminar

## Second Day

*Date :* 22nd February, 1969.

*Time :* 10-30 A.M. to 1 P.M., and 2 P.M. to 5 P.M.

*Subject :* Lakṣmī and Sarasvatī in Art and Literature.

*Place :* Lecture Hall at the Department of Ancient Indian History and Culture, Calcutta University, 51/2, Hazra Road, Calcutta-19.

*Chairman :* Prof. D.C. SIRCAR, Calcutta University.

### *Participants :*

- |                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| 1. DR. L. K. TRIPATHI     | Banaras Hindu University                              |
| 2. DR. K. SUNDARAM        | Andhra University, Waltair                            |
| 3. DR. SM. B. Lahiri      | Jadavpur University                                   |
| 4. DR. B. P. MAZUMDAR     | Patna University                                      |
| 5. SRI C. D. CHATTERJEE   | Lucknow   |
| 6. SRI D. MUKHERJEE       | Calcutta University                                   |
| 7. DR. A. N. LAHIRI       | Do.   |
| 8. SRI T. N. CHAKRABORTY  | Do.   |
| 9. DR. K. K. DASGUPTA     | Do.   |
| 10. DR. S. BANDYOPADHYAY  | Centre of Advanced Study in AIHC, Calcutta University |
| 11. DR. D. R. Das         | Do.   |
| 12. DR. A. K. CHATTERJEE  | Do.   |
| 13. SRI J. R. HALDAR      | Do.   |
| 14. SRI C. L. CHAKRABARTI | Dinabandhu College, Bangaon, 24 Pargs. Dist., W.B.    |
| 15. SM. M. MUKHOPADHYAY   | Beltala Girls' School, Calcutta and others.           |

*Reporters :* SRI R. K. BILLOREY and others.

## Morning Session

The session started at 10-30 A. M., and Dr. A. K. Chatterjee was first invited to read his paper entitled 'Some Aspects of Sarasvatī.' He tried to show that Sarasvatī was not only the goddess of wisdom and learning, but was also the goddess of medicine, fine arts and prosperity.

Prof. D. C. Sircar initiated the discussion on Dr. Chatterjee's paper with his comment on the latter's statement that Sarasvatī is not a quarrelsome deity. He pointed out that a story in the *Devībhāgavata* represents Viṣṇu's wives Sarasvatī, Lakṣmī and Gaṅgā as engaged in so intense a quarrel that their poor husband had to give away Sarasvatī to Brahman and Gaṅgā to Śiva.\* Prof. Sircar also observed that Sarasvatī as the goddess of learning is unknown in early Pali literature, though the medieval *Cūlavamsa* mentions the *Sarasvatī-maṇḍapa* built by Parākramabāhu I. He thought that Sarasvatī (literally, 'full of lakes') was first a river and river-goddess and was then identified with Bhārati (the tutelary deity of the Bharata people living on the Sarasvatī river) and the goddess of speech and learning. Dr. A. K. Chatterjee supposed that Sarasvatī acquired the geographical significance at a later date ; but Prof. Sircar did not agree with the view. Dr. L. K. Tripathi wanted to know whether the expression *payasvatī* would help us in explaining *Sarasvatī* ; but Prof. Sircar failed to see any connection between the two.

Sm. Manisha Mukhopadhyay next read her paper on 'Lakṣmī and Sarasvatī in Sanskrit Inscriptions' in which she showed how the description of deities in the *namaskāra* stanzas in inscriptions is supplementary to their description found in literary sources. She observed that, in epigraphic records, sometimes Lakṣmī and Sarasvatī are mentioned as co-wives, but are not represented as the daughters of Durgā. Dr. L. K. Tripathi and Dr. K. Sundaram wanted to know the date of the

\* [Sarasvatī is called *prakṛti-mukharā* in a well-known stanza.—Ed.]

earliest epigraphic reference to Rājalakṣmī. While Prof. D. C. Sircar said that the royal fortune conceived as the king's wife is often noticed in the records of the Gupta age, Dr. S. Bandyopadhyay observed that the earliest epigraph mentioning Rājalakṣmī seems to be the Junagadh inscription of 150 A. D. As regards the conception of Rājalakṣmī, Prof. Sircar thought that it might be related to the divine conception of the king as found in the early centuries of the Christian era, in works like the *Manusmṛiti* and epigraphs like the Allahabad pillar inscription of Samudragupta. Sri D. Mukherjee agreed with the view of Prof. Sircar who further observed that sovereignty conceived as a king's wife seems to be unknown in Europe. On Sm. Mukhopadhyay's statement about a Kadamba inscription referring to Lakṣmī on Viṣṇu's breast, Dr. Bandyopadhyay recalled the Purāṇic description of the goddess as *Viṣṇor-vakṣaḥ-sthala-sthā* and a Khajuraho sculpture representing her in the same position.

Dr. Bandyopadhyay then wanted to know the antiquity of the custom of associating the word *śrī* with personal names. Prof. Sircar replied that the Nanaghat and Hathigumpha inscriptions of the first century B. C. fall among the earliest records indicating the custom. Dr. Bandyopadhyay also said that Sm. Mukhopadhyay did not notice the Gayā inscription of Yakṣapāla, a passage of which has been explained by Prof. Sircar as alluding to the joint image of Viṣṇu and Kamalā (Lakṣmī). Prof. Sircar observed that his own paper to be read at the Seminar was on the same subject.

Dr. L. K. Tripathi then read his paper on 'Śrī-Lakṣmī in Early Indian Literature and Art'. Dr. Tripathi pointed out that Lakṣmī appears as an important goddess in the *Mahābhāṣya*. He also referred to the controversy regarding the identification of the goddess represented in Indian art from about the second century B. C., Coomaraswamy calling her

Gajalakṣmī and Foucher finding in it the scene of the nativity of the Buddha. Dr. Tripathi further referred to the controversy regarding the identification of the goddess represented on the reverse of the Gupta coins in association with the lotus and the lion. He regarded this deity definitely as Lakṣmī, the motif being traceable on a coin of Azes.

Dr. S. Bandyopadhyay pointed out that Dr. Tripathi had not referred to a coin of Azilises, which bears the representation of Gajalakṣmī. He agreed that the goddess represented on the reverse of the Gupta coins must be Lakṣmī, because she is often found to hold the noose (*pāśa*) and the lotus, while the *Devyupaniṣad* describes Lakṣmī as holding *pāśa*, and the Lakṣmī-mantra quoted from the *Ātharvaṇarahasya* by Mādhava Vyāsa in his *Bṛhatstotraratnākara* mentions the goddess as *śimhavāhinī*. Dr. Bandyopadhyay thought that the goddess may be Ādyāśakti Mahālakṣmī and not merely Vaiṣṇavī Mahālakṣmī, for the *Devyupaniṣad* describes her as the embodiment of all energy (*sarvāśakti*).

Regarding Dr. Tripathi's suggestion that what was originally the scene of the Buddha's birth was later transformed into Gajalakṣmī, Prof. D. C. Sircar wanted to know whether he meant to say that there was a time when the two conceptions overlapped. Dr. Tripathi replied that this might have occurred in the Gupta age. Prof. Sircar was not inclined to accept the Buddha's nativity theory because both the Buddha's birth and Gajalakṣmī are represented at Bharhut quite differently. When Dr. D. R. Dāś wanted to know the identity of the deity represented at Bharhut, Dr. Tripathi characterised her as Lakṣmī. Prof. Sircar did not accept Dr. A. K. Chatterjee's supposition that Sarasvatī is represented at Bharhut, and observed that, Sarasvatī being unknown to the early Pali literature as the goddess of learning, she is not expected to be represented in the sculptures of the Buddhist *stūpa* at Bharhut.

Dr. K. K. Dasgupta wanted to know whether there was any early evidence about Gajalakṣmī. Prof. Sircar replied that, in the absence of earlier evidence, later evidence is often better than mere speculation. In connection with the Buddha's nativity theory, Dr. Tripathi emphasised the fact that the Buddha was represented only by symbol in early Indian art. On a question from Dr. A. N. Lahiri, he said that the symbols were the elephant, umbrella, lotus, etc. The session then closed for the lunch interval at 1 p. m.

### Afternoon Session

Sri J. R. Haldar was invited to read his paper on 'Lakkhī in Pāli Literature' which examined the early Buddhist literary evidence throwing light on the conception of the goddess. Dr. S. Bandyopadhyay pointed out that Lakṣmī of the Pāli texts and the ways to win her favour as described in it are practically the same as we find in the Purāṇas. Dr. Bandyopadhyay particularly referred to the *Kālakauṣṭhī Jātaka* and observed that some of the Purāṇas describe the goddess in similar terms.

Dr. Sm. B. Lahiri next read her paper on 'Lakṣmī on Early Indian Coins'. As regards her identification of the female figure on the coins of Pantaleon and Agathocles as the goddess Lakṣmī, Dr. S. Bandyopadhyay observed that Dr. Sm. Lahiri should have also mentioned the same figure on the coins of king Peucolaus. Dr. Sm. Lahiri agreed with Dr. Bandyopadhyay whom she thanked for drawing her attention to the omission. Regarding the identification of Nārāyaṇī and Durgā, Prof. Sircar was not inclined to attach any special importance to it. He pointed out that this is only theoretical, but not real, identification. Sri D. Mukherjee agreed with Prof. Sircar.



Dr. K. K. Dasgupta wanted to know whether any female figure with lotus should be identified with Lakṣmī. Prof. Sircar remarked that, as Lakṣmī is particularly associated with the lotus and as coins often bear figures of divinities, the identification of the female figure on the coins of Pantaleon, Agathocles and Peucolaus with Lakṣmī, called Kamalā, is plausible. Dr. Dasgupta's reference to Tārā in this connection, Prof. Sircar pointed out, is not quite relevant since she came to be worshipped about the Gupta age, considerably after the days of the Indo-Greek kings.\*

The last paper of the day was entitled *Ardhanārī-Nārāyaṇa* which was read by Prof. D. C. Sircar. It dealt with the conception of joint images of Viṣṇu and Lakṣmī (resembling that of the *Ardhanārī* form of Śiva and Pārvatī) prevalent in Eastern India from the age of the Pālas. Attention was drawn by Prof. Sircar to his interpretation of a passage in the *Gayā* inscription of Yaśapāla, to certain passages in the *Purāṇas* and other records and to some representations of such composite forms especially coming from Nepal.

Referring to Prof. Sircar's discussion on the conception of Lakṣmī as a goddess of learning, Dr. A. K. Chatterjee observed that this might be due to the idiosyncrasy of the artists. Disagreeing with this view, Prof. Sircar referred to certain texts describing Lakṣmī as a goddess 'carrying a manuscript and as associated with learning and also to sculptural specimens of the deity with a manuscript in her hand. Dr. S. Bandyopadhyay pointed out that Lakṣmī is described as *medhā*

\* [The Indo-Scythian coin bearing the representation of the goddess with lotus in hand, called *Pakhalavadidevada*, 'the city-divinity of Puṣkalāvatī,' should also be mentioned. See Gardner's *Catalogue*, p. 162; Coomarswamy in 'Early Indian Iconography', *Eastern Art*, Vol. I, Plate IX, fig. 9. It is interesting to note that the name of Peucolaus is apparently associated with *Peucolaotis* = *Puṣkalāvatī*, 'the city of lotuses', and that Lakṣmī is particularly associated with lotuses.—Ed.]

and *vidyā* in the *Skanda Purāṇa*. He also referred to the following passage in the Purāṇic story of creation—*Kṛṣṇasya paramātmānaḥ | Devī vām-āṁśa-sambhūtā*.

Dr. B. P. Mazumdar remarked that the conception of Ardhanārīśvara is not old, so that the composite image of Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa could not have been borrowed from the Śaiva conception of Ardhanārīśvara. On the other hand, he suggested, the Śaivas may have borrowed the idea from the Vaiṣṇavas. Dr. K. K. Dasgupta agreed with the view, while Dr. K. Sundaram observed that religious syncretism developed only in the thirteenth century. Dr. L. K. Tripathi and Prof. Sircar, who regarded these views as quite absurd, pointed out that the Ardhanārīśvara conception of Śiva is as old as the days of Kālidāsa. Dr. S. Bandyopadhyay drew attention to the reference to Ardhanārīśvara in the Chhoti-Sadri inscription of 491 A. D. and to his representation on a coin and a sculpture of the Kuṣāṇa age.

With regard to Prof. Sircar's reference to the Purāṇic description of an Ardhanārī form of Viṣṇu-Kṛṣṇa having four hands on one side and two on the other, Dr. A. N. Lahiri observed that a Tripurā coin represents Ardhanārīśvara with five hands on one side and two on the other. Referring to Prof. Sircar's description of the relationship between Lakṣmī and Sarasvatī, Dr. B. P. Mazumdar said that no image of Sarasvatī has been discovered in North Bihar where the name of the goddess is not found in the local dialect. Prof. Sircar considered it rather strange and thought that, although the worship of Sarasvatī might not be popular in North Bihar as elsewhere, the statement requires verification.\*

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\* [Dinaband u Jhā's Maithilī Dictionary entitled *Mithilābhāṣākoṣa*, p. 329, recognises *Sarasvatī* explained as *Vāgdevī*.—Ed. ]

At the end, Prof. Sircar thanked all those who participated in the deliberations of the two days' seminars and made them a success. He particularly thanked those who represented Universities other than Calcutta and requested them to forgive the Centre of Advanced Study in Ancient Indian History and Culture, Calcutta University, for the inconvenience they may have experienced during their short stay in Calcutta. He also thanked the workers of the Centre who helped him in arranging for the Seminars.

The session closed at 5 P. M.

## Lakṣmī in Orissan Literature and Art

K. S. Behera, Utkal University, Bhubaneswar

Lakṣmī, as the goddess of wealth and prosperity, enjoyed wide popularity in India. Her antiquity can be traced back to the early period. The Hāthigumphā inscription of Khāravela throws light on the conception of this divinity in the first century B. C. The phrase *siri-kaḍāra-sariravatā* describing the graceful appearance of Khāravela has been sometimes explained as possessing a body like that of Kṛṣṇa. Thus, for example, Sten Konow and Jayaswal render the term *siri-kaḍāra* as the lover of Śrī, i.e. Viṣṇu. However, the exact significance of the phrase is a subject of controversy among the scholars; but it is at any rate incontestable that the custom of using the word *śrī* along with the names, as we do now, was in vogue.<sup>1</sup> This is evident from such expressions as *siri-Khārvelena*, *Khāravela-siri*, *Kudepa-siri*, and *siri-Khāravela* used in the Hāthigumphā and Mañcapurī cave inscriptions at Udayagiri. In the above-mentioned examples, *śrī* appears in Prakrit as *siri*.

### Gajalakṣmī

Besides the epigraphic references, on a tympanum of the Anantagumphā, we find one of the earliest representations of Śrī in Indian art (Figure 1). The goddess stands in a lotus pond and holds lotuses in her two hands. A pair of elephants pours water over her head from jars held in their trunks. The motif, associated with this Jaina cave, is in keeping with the story that Trīṣalā, before giving birth

1. At Bharhut also, we find the name 'Sirimā Devatā' on the side of a female figure.

to Mahāvīra, in her dream saw this goddess being bathed by elephants. In the Buddhist art at Sanchi and Bharhut also, this auspicious motif occurs, indicating its popularity among the followers of different religions.

In Orissan art, this motif known as Gajalakṣmī is fairly prolific. Generally the divinity is depicted on the central part of the lintels of the doorways.<sup>2</sup> It is for this reason that the principal doorway of Orissan temples is called Lakṣmīdvāra.<sup>3</sup> The *Śilpaprakāśa*,<sup>4</sup> a medieval Orissan work on Śilpa-śāstra by Rāmacandra Kaulācāra, mentions two varieties of Torāṇalakṣmī, viz. Gajalakṣmī and Śubhalakṣmī.<sup>5</sup> In the former, the elephants appear above her head, while in the latter they are depicted on the pedestal.<sup>6</sup> Of these two types in Orissan temples, the most popular representations are those of the Gajalakṣmī. Usually the goddess is shown with two hands; in the left hand she holds a stalk of lotus and in her right hand she exhibits the *varadamudrā*. A pair of elephants pour water over her from jars held in their uplifted trunks. She is shown seated either in the *padm-āsana* pose or in the *lalit-āsana*. Sometimes, in

2 The custom of carving Lakṣmī on the door-lintels appears to have been a very old practice. C. Sivaramamurti draws our attention to a reference to this motif in the *Rāmāyaṇa* (V. 14). Vide *Ancient India*, No. 6, p. 28.

3 N. K. Bose, *Cannons of Orissan Architecture*, Calcutta, 1932, p. 174.

4 Alice Boner and Sadāśivaratha Śarmā, *Śilpaprakāśa*, Leiden, 1966.

5 Cf. *dvividhaṃ toraṇaṃ Lakṣmīḥ toraṇ-ārdhe nyaveśayet | Gajalakṣmīś = ca tat-sthāne Śubhalakṣmīḥ śubhapradā* (*Śilpaprakāśa*, Utkal University manuscript No. 085, folio 9).

6 M. M. Ganguly in his *Orissa and her Remains* (p. 182) speaks of Mahalakṣmī without the attendant elephants and asserts that such a specimen is found on the door-lintel of the Jagamohana of the Mukteśvara temple. But the image under reference is that of a four-armed male figure whose attributes are missing.

addition to these features, the goddess is flanked by a *cāmara*-bearer on either side. The sanctum doorway of the Mukteśvara temple at Bhubaneswar (Figure 9) and the eastern doorway of the Jagamohana of Konarak offer excellent examples of this variety. The tradition of carving Gajalakṣmī on the door-lintels was not confined to any particular religion: the motif appears even over the door frame of the Ratnagiri *Mahāvihāra* (Figure 2). However, the Buddhists had Vasudhārā as a counterpart of Lakṣmī. As the consort of Jambhala, Vasudhārā was worshipped for bestowing prosperity and her image was often placed in the *Mahāvihāras*. The images of Jambhala have been discovered in different parts of Orissa and this would appear to suggest that Vasudhārā also was worshipped in Orissa. A representation of four-armed Gajalakṣmī (Figure 3) appearing on the wall of a shrine at Mahāvīra-chak in Jāipur reveals interesting similarity between Vasudhārā and Gajalakṣmī. The iconography of the image is unique. Some portions of the sculpture have been covered by a thick coating of plaster; yet the four hands and the attendant elephants could be recognised without difficulty. A stalk of rice held in her upper right-hand points to an intimate link with the iconography of Vasudhārā.

Besides the door-lintels, Gajalakṣmī also appears on the windows of the Jagamohana. For example, the motif is depicted on the latticed windows of the Jagamohana of the Mukteśvara temple and the balustraded window of the Ananta-Vāsudeva temple at Bhubaneswar. The Lakṣmī temple at Puri also has representations of Gajalakṣmī above the balustraded windows of its Jagamohana.

The depiction of Gajalakṣmī on the walls of temples is rare. At Konarak, one such example in the niche of the Vajramuṇḍi can be noticed on the northern side of the Piṣṭa wall of the Nāṭa-mandira. It is also interesting to find

Gajalakṣmī carved on the axle medallion of a wheel (Figure 4). Even the motif is found on the lintel of the Khākharāmūṇḍi placed in the sanctum of the ruined subsidiary shrine in front of the southern *pārśvadevatā* of the main temple. The Gajalakṣmī motif was adopted as the royal emblem by the Somavamśi kings of Orissa. The seal attached to the copper plates of this dynasty, which is in the form of an expanded lotus, has an embossed figure of Gajalakṣmī in the centre.

At many places in Orissa, specially in temples dedicated to Viṣṇu and Jagannātha, brass or *aṣṭadhātu* (octo-alloy) images of Gajalakṣmī are found. One specimen of the goddess from the Lakṣmī-Janārdana temple at Garh Andhia (near Nimapara, Puri District) may be cited here by way of illustration. The four-armed goddess (Figure 5) carries lotuses in her two upper hands, and on each lotus a pair of elephants are placed. These four elephants pour water over the goddess. Of the two lower hands, the goddess shows the *varada-mudrā* in the right and the *abhaya-mudrā* in the left. According to the family tradition of the Zamindar whose ancestors established this temple, the image can be assigned to the 18th century. The *Dhyānamālā* by Śrī-Rāma, an unpublished work relating to iconography, now preserved in the Utkal University Library, speaks of two types of Lakṣmī : Lakṣmī holding lotus and *śrīphala* in her hands, attended by female *cāmara*-bearers and being bathed by elephants,<sup>7</sup> and Lakṣmī exhibiting the *abhaya* and *varada*-

7 Cf. *Padm-āsaṇā tu kartavyā padma-śrīphala-pāṇikā |*  
*dakṣiṇe puṇḍarikāṃ ca vāma-hastena śrīphalam ||*  
*sthitā vā trivali-bhaṅgi-śobhitā vā praśasyate |*  
*striyau pārśva-dvaye kārye śubhe cāmara-hastike ||*  
*bhṛṅgāra-hastau dvau nāgau snapayantau śriyaṃ sthitau |*  
*Śrīr = iyaṃ lakṣaṇ-opetā sthāpitā sarva-kāmadā ||*  
*(Dhyānamālā by Śrīrāma, folio 33).*

*mudrā* in her hands and being bathed by four elephants.<sup>8</sup> The Gajalakṣmī from Garh Andhia conforms to this second type mentioned in the *Dhyānamālā*.

### Lakṣmī-Narayana.

The association of Lakṣmī with Nārāyaṇa is alluded to in many Orissan inscriptions. The Hindol plate of Śubha-karadeva makes a reference to Lakṣmī adorning the lap of Viṣṇu.<sup>9</sup>

The opening verses of some Gaṅga charters are devoted to the adoration of Lakṣmī and her husband.<sup>10</sup> The relationship between Rājarāja and Rājasundarī has been compared to the relationship between Lakṣmī and Nārāyaṇa.<sup>11</sup> The same thing is repeated while referring to Jākalladevī as the queen of Bhānudeva.<sup>12</sup> The epigraphic references to the union of Lakṣmī with Nārāyaṇa are rivalled by excellent representations in medieval Orissan sculpture. The fine specimens of the Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa image found at Kendupatna (Cuttack District), Chaurasi (Puri District) and in a subsidiary shrine of the Liṅgarāja temple at Bhubaneswar, can be assigned to the Gaṅga period. The image at the Liṅgarāja temple (Figure 6), which is now worshipped in a shrine to the north of the Bhogamaṇḍapa, is not in the perfect condition; but even in this broken state, it can

8 Cf. *kāntyā kāñcana-sannibhām Himagiri-prakhyair=caturbhir=gajair=hast-otkṣipta-hiraṇmay-āṁṣṭa-ghaṭair=āśicyamānām śriyam | bibhrā ṇām varam=abja-yugmam=abhayaṁ hastaiḥ kirīṭ-oj्ज्वालām kṣaum-ābaddha-nitamba-bimba-lalitām vande=’ravinda-sthitām* ||

(*ibid.*, folio 34).

9 Cf. *Lakṣmīr=vakṣaḥ-sthale vā vasati Madhuripo=yāvad=ambho-jahastā* (B. Misra, *Orissa under the Bhauma Kings*, p. 16).

10 *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XXVIII, p. 249.

11 *Ibid.* p. 251.

12 *Ibid.*, Vol. XXXI, p. 124.



be identified as a great piece of art. The divine couple gracefully sit together on a throne. Viṣṇu tenderly looks towards Lakṣmī and caresses the breast of the goddess with great detachment. The god holds *cakra* in his back right hand and lotus in his back left hand. Lakṣmī carries a lotus in her left hand and with her right hand she encircles the neck of Viṣṇu. Their faces are lit with calm contentment and delight. The image at Chaurasi<sup>13</sup> is the presiding deity of a temple which is now open to the sky. The Navagraha slab is still lying near the temple and two of the *pāśvadevatās* are still *in situ* in the niches of the temple. The image, made in chlorite stone, is in good condition. The holy couple are shown seated on a throne which is supported by the Gajasimha motifs. The four-armed Nārāyaṇa holds lotus in his upper right hand and *cakra* in his back left hand. His normal right hand placed in front of the goddess is in the *Abhaya* pose. With the left hand the god embraces Lakṣmī who holds lotus in left hand and places her right hand on the shoulder of her lord. Below the throne, among the devotees is a kneeling royal person with a sword. In the Lakṣmī-Janārdana temple at Garh Andhia, brass images of the divinities are worshipped (Figure 7). In the sanctum, separate images of Gajalakṣmī and Janārdana are placed side by side, of which the former is identical in iconography with the other Gajalakṣmī image, described earlier, from the temple. The only difference that can be noticed is in the placing of the elephants on the lotuses carried by the goddess.

#### Association of Lakṣmī with Viṣṇu and his Incarnations.

As a consort, Lakṣmī appears along with Sarasvatī by the side of the god Viṣṇu. This feature is noticed in all the Viṣṇu

<sup>13</sup> Das, G. S., *Exploration of the Prachi Valley*, Utkal University, Plate No. 25.

images found in Orissa. Lakṣmī is specially associated with the Narasimha and Varāha incarnations of Viṣṇu. Images of Lakṣmī-Nṛsimha are worshipped at many places in Orissa. There is a small temple for Lakṣmī-Nṛsimha near the Amareśvara Śiva temple at Amareśwar near Chaurasi in the Puri District. At Bhubaneswar, Lakṣmī-Nṛsimha, along with Gaṇeśa and Śiva, are worshipped in the premises of the Gosahasreśvara temple ; an image of Lakṣmī-Nṛsimha is fixed on the eastern niche of the detached Maṇḍapa that stands in front of the Rāmeśvara temple. Within the Liṅga-rāja temple, there is a separate shrine for Lakṣmī-Nṛsimha near the kitchen block. In the Oriya *Nṛsimha Purāṇa* by Pītāmbara Dāsa, who was a contemporary of king Vīra Keśari-deva (1737-93 A.D.), elaborate descriptions of the marriage of Lakṣmī with Narasimha is given in the third Ratnākara. In the fourth Ratnākara, the marriage of Alakṣmī and her traits have been discussed. The *Vicitra Nṛsimha Purāṇa* of Dāśarathi Miśra closely follows the pattern of Pītāmbara Dāsa and in the third Sāgara, the author deals with the birth of Lakṣmī and her marriage with the god Nṛsimha.

Associated with Varāha, Lakṣmī-Varāha is worshipped with Yajña-Varāha and Śveta-Varāha, in the Varāha temple at Jāipur.

### **Mahālakṣmī in the Śākta Cult.**

The Śāktas worship Mahālakṣmī in the form of a supreme goddess (Ādyāśakti). As a famous Śākta-kṣetra, Jāipur has a unique representation of this eighteen-armed goddess in a small temple in front of the Trilocana temple. In the Śākta pantheon, the seven mothers occupy a prominent place, and in this group Lakṣmī appears as Vaiṣṇavī. The images of the Sapta-mātṛkās have been discovered at Jāipur, Purī and Dharmaśālā (Cutṭack District). The image of

Vaiṣṇavī, from Dharmaśālā, is now in the State Museum at Bhubaneswar (Figure 8). Kamalā is also included among the Daśa-Mahāvidyās. These goddesses have been represented in painting on the walls of the Jagamohana of the Vimalā temple at Purī, and the Bhagavatī temple at Bāṇpur.

### Lakṣmī Temple.

Orissa has the distinction of possessing a temple dedicated to Lakṣmī. Like the Mahālakṣmī temple at Kolhapur (Maharashtra),<sup>14</sup> the temple of Lakṣmī inside the inner courtyard of the Jagannātha temple at Purī is an important centre of her worship. The Nagari copper-plates, while referring to the erection of a temple for Puruṣottama (Jagannātha) by Gaṅgeśvara (Coḍagaṅgadeva), further mentions that, the ocean being the birth place of Lakṣmī, Viṣṇu had to stay in his father-in-law's house which was rather shameful to him. So the god was glad to get this new temple of his own and Lakṣmī too gladly preferred living in her husband's new abode to staying in her father's mansion.<sup>15</sup> From this it is evident that Anantavarman Coḍagaṅga built the temple of Jagannātha as well as the temple of Lakṣmī within the precincts of the former. In this connection, mention should be made that Coḍagaṅgadeva had several queens and some of them had names like Lakṣmīdevī, Padmalādevī and Śrīyādevī. An inscription of this monarch

14 M. S. Mate, *Temples and Legends of Maharashtra* (Bhavan's Book University, No. 97), pp. 26 ff.

15 Cf. *Lakṣmī-janma-gṛhaṃ payonidhir=asau sambhāvitasya sthitir=no dhāmi śvaśurasya pūjyate iti kṣīr-ābdhi-vāsād=dhruvam | nirviṇṇaḥ Puruṣottamaḥ pramuditas=tad-vāsa-lābhād = Ram = āpy=etad=bhartṛ-gṛhaṃ varam pitṛ-gṛhāt prāpya pramod-ānvitā ||* (Ep. Ind., Vol. XXVIII, pp. 251-52). [The stanza is found in many other records.—Ed.]

ends with the mention of Mahālakṣmī (Sarvamaṅgalya-Mahāśrī).<sup>16</sup>

The temple of Lakṣmī, situated to the north-west of the Jagannātha temple, consists of five structures of which the Vimāna and the Jagamohana formed parts of the original plan. The Deul has been plastered like the Jagannātha temple; but the original carvings are still visible on the *bāḍa* of the Jagamohana. The Jagamohana stands on a low *piṣṭa* or platform which is made of three mouldings—*khurā*, *kaṇi* and *basanta*. The first is decorated with lotus petals; the *kaṇi* is plain and the *basanta* is decorated with fine scroll work. The *bāḍa* of the Jagamohana has three vertical divisions—*pābhāga*, *jāṅgha* and *baraṇḍa*. The *pābhāga* is composed of a set of five mouldings—*khurā*, *kumbha*, *paṭā*, *kaṇi* and *basanta*—all decorated in their characteristic style. The *jāṅgha* is provided with two balustraded windows, one on the north and the other on the south. In the intermediary *rathas*, elongated *khākharā-muṇḍis* have been inserted, and these are flanked by *nāga* and *nāgī* pilasters which have *gajaviḍālas* at the bottom. The *nāgas* and *nāgīs*, with coils descending from above, recall the treatment on the Mukteśvara temple at Bhubaneswar. The facets of the corner *rathas* are decorated with arabesque, scroll work and graceful female figures. In the niches of the *khākharā-muṇḍis* were placed eight seated Dikpālas of whom Indra, Agni, Nirṛti, Kubera and Isāna are still *in situ* in their respective directions. The absence of the consorts of the Dikpālas proves that the temple cannot be assigned to the later Gaṅga period when it had become a well-established custom to carve the Dikpālas

16 *Inscriptions of Orissa*, ed. Rajaguru, S. N., Vol. III, Part I, p. 47. [This is a *maṅgala* found in many epigraphs, and *mahāśrī* here means 'great prosperity' because, for *maṅgalam* or *maṅgalam mahāśrīḥ*, etc., we have sometimes *śubham bhavatu maṅgalam mahāśrīḥ*, *maṅgalam mahati ca śrīḥ*, etc. See *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XXXII, pp. 44, 55, 60, 76.—Ed.]

together with their consorts. The roof of the Jagamohana is pyramidal. The presiding deity of the *deul* is a four-armed Gajalakṣmī. The pilgrims never fail to pay homage to this goddess of prosperity. It is customary to sit in the 'Acintā maṇḍapa' of this temple after visiting the several shrines within the enclosure of the Jagannātha temple. The temple has a separate kitchen for preparing the *bhoga* for Lakṣmī.

**Laksmi, wife of Lord Jagannātha.**

The origin of the worship of Jagannātha is a subject of controversy. It is sometimes believed that he was originally a tribal god who was absorbed in the Brāhmaṇical fold. Attempts have also been made to trace his origin from different religions like Buddhism, Jainism, Śaivism, etc. Whatever may be the origin, in course of time, with the rise of Vaiṣṇavism, Jagannātha was identified with Viṣṇu and therefore Lakṣmī was regarded as his consort. As early as the 9th century A.D., the *Anargharāghava-nāṭaka* of Murāri refers to Puruṣottama as the consort of Kamalā.<sup>17</sup> The *Rudra-yāmala Tantra* also describes Jagannātha in the company of Kamalā.<sup>18</sup> A Nagpur stone inscription of a Mālava ruler (1104 A.D.) refers to Puruṣottama, the consort of Śrī, who relieved the earth by defeating the enemy Bali.<sup>19</sup> The association of Lakṣmī as an indispensable consort of Jagannātha had taken place long before the construction of the present temples in honour of them by Coḍagaṅgadeva. But the construction of a separate temple for Lakṣmī is of considerable importance, for it represents a visible symbol of the eternal relationship between the two divinities. The

17 Cf. *Kamalā-kuca-kalaśa-keli-kastūrikā-patraṅkarasya bhagavataḥ Puruṣottamasya, Anargharāghava-nāṭakam*, Nirṇay Sāgar ed., Act I, p. 8.

18 Vide Gurudas Sarkar, *Mandirer Kathā* (Bengali), p. 139.

19 *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. II, p. 180.

*Bhaktibhāgavata* of Kaviḍiṇḍima Jīvadev-ācārya (composed in 1510 A.D.) speaks of the husband of Lakṣmī who is worshipped at the Nīlācala in triple form.<sup>20</sup> It is also significant to note that, on the *ratnavedī*, Jagannātha is flanked by Lakṣmī and Sarasvatī. The image of Lakṣmī, which is placed on the left side of Jagannātha, is made of gold. According to the traditions of the *Mādalāpāñjī*,<sup>21</sup> this golden image was made by a Marāṭhā *guru* during the reign of Divyasimhadeva II (1793-95 A.D.). Iconographically, it is a four-armed Gajalakṣmī and is similar in treatment to the Gajalakṣmī which is worshipped with Janārdana at Garh Andhiā (Figure 7). The goddess holds lotuses in the two upper hands. A pair of elephants stand each on a lotus and pour water over the goddess from jars held in their trunks. The lower right hand of the goddess is in the *Varada* pose while the lower left hand shows the *Abhaya-mudrā*.

Lakṣmī, as the consort of Jagannātha, plays an important part in the periodical festivals of the temple. She is said to supervise the cooking of the food for Jagannātha. It is believed that thousands of pilgrims daily get their *prasāda* by the grace of this goddess. The ceremonies associated with her reveal the human-cum-divine love of the divine couple. On the second day of the bright fortnight of the month of Āṣāḍha, Jagannātha goes out with Balabhadra and Subhadra in cars to the Guṇḍicābāḍī. This is considered humiliating to Lakṣmī; so the goddess is taken in a procession to the Guṇḍicābāḍī on the *herā-pañcamī* day. There she breaks the car of Jagannātha to express her displeasure for not being taken in his company during the *ratha-yātrā*. On this occasion, one of the *sevakas* actually removes a piece of wood from the car and thereafter Lakṣmī returns to the

20 *JAS*, Vol. IV, No. 1, 1962, p. 23.

21 *Mādalāpāñjī* (Oriya), ed. A. B. Mohanty, p. 81.

temple. On the *bāhuḍā-yātrā* day, when the cars make their return journey, Lakṣmī as a devoted wife comes out and anxiously waits at the 'Cāhānī-maṇḍapa' for the return of her lord. When the car of Jagannātha approaches the lion-gate, she goes out to welcome her husband ; this ceremony is performed by taking the image of Lakṣmī in a procession round the car of Jagannātha. On the Dvādaśī day (*Nilādribije*), Balabhadra and Subhadra return to the *ratna-siṃhāsana*. When Jagannātha gets down from the car and proceeds to the temple, Lakṣmī accompanied by the Devadāsīs again comes to the 'Bheṭa-maṇḍapa' for greeting her lord. The Devadāsīs of Lakṣmī, however, close the door and do not allow Jagannātha to enter into the temple as he forgot to take their goddess along with him for the *ratha-yātrā*. A mock quarrel is performed by the Daitās ( a class of Sevakas ) of Jagannātha and the Devadāsīs and thereafter Jagannātha enters the temple.

On Thursdays, Lakṣmī takes part in certain special ceremonies. After 'Sakāla-dhūpa', Madanamohana, along with Lakṣmī and Sarasvatī, are carried to the 'Majāṇā-Maṇḍapa'. There they receive homage from the people and after some hours return to the temple for 'Dviprahara-dhūpa'. In the evening, on Thursdays, Lakṣmī and Madanamohana are carried in a palanquin to the Jagamohana of the Lakṣmī temple where 'Vandāpanā', 'Karpūra' and 'Valitā Ālati' are performed in their honour. This ceremony is called 'Ekānta'. However, according to the established customs of the temple, 'Ekānta' is not performed on certain days in the year. For example, if the Thursday falls on the Ekādaśī, no 'Ekānta' is held. Similarly, from the 'Snāna-pūrṇimā' till the return of Jagannātha from the car festival, no 'Majāṇā' or 'Ekānta' is held.

In the evening of the 'Kumāra-pūrṇimā', Lakṣmī and Madanamohana are taken in a procession to the Jagamohana of the Lakṣmī temple. There the Sevakas play dice on behalf of the holy couple. Thereafter they return to the temple. After the Baḍa-siṅgāra-dhūpa, again dice is played in front of the *ratna-siṃhāsana*. As Jagannātha is defeated in the play, Nilamādhava is carried to the temple of Lakṣmī where he stays for 7 days. Another special ceremony associated with Lakṣmī is the 'Rukmiṇī-haraṇa Ekādaśī'. On that day, the marriage between Lakṣmī and Madanamohana is celebrated.

### Certain Notions regarding Lakṣmī.

There are certain notions regarding the goddess frequently referred to in literature. Thus, for example, the Brahmeśvara inscription of the time of Uddyotakeśarin begins with the description of the churning of the ocean which led to the birth of Lakṣmī.<sup>22</sup> The association of Lakṣmī with the lotus lake is alluded to in verse 6 of the Ananta-Vāsudeva temple inscription.<sup>23</sup> The conception of Lakṣmī as the guardian goddess of sovereignty (Rājalakṣmī) can be traced in Orissan inscriptions. According to the Brahmeśvara inscription,<sup>24</sup> Janāmejaya 'drew to himself the fortune of the king of the Uḍra country who was killed by his *kunta* in a battle' (*Uḍradeśa-nṛpater = lakṣmīm*). For describing the heroism of Viṣṇu (a general of Gaṅga Anaṅgabhīma III), the Cāteśvara temple inscription says, "While he is on the alert, no harm whatsoever [ can come ] to the sovereignty of the lord of Uṭkala (*Uṭkalapateḥ sāmrajya-lakṣmī*)".<sup>25</sup> The traditional

22 *JRASB* (Letters), Vol. XIII, pp. 63 ff.

23 *OHRJ*, Vol I, No. 4, p. 282.

24 *JRASB* (Letters), Vol. XIII, p. 72.

25 *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XXIX, p. 131.



association of Lakṣmī with victory was also very popular. The Tekkali plates of Madhyamarāja<sup>26</sup> refers to Jayaśrī. During the Gaṅga period, it is not unusual to find a village named as Vijaya-Lakṣmīpura. The *Hariharacaturaṅgam*, a medieval Orissan Sanskrit text on military science by Godāvara Miśra, while describing the merits of joining in warfare, speaks of the association of Lakṣmī with victory.<sup>27</sup>

### Popular Phase of Lakṣmī Worship

In Orissa, Lakṣmī is worshipped in the night of Kaumudī-pūrṇimā ( fullmoon day of the month of Āśvina ). On that occasion, clay images of the goddess are worshiped in many towns of Orissa. Among the femalefolk of Orissa, the Māṇavasā or Lakṣmī-pūjā-vrata<sup>28</sup> is very popular. This is pre-eminently a harvest festival and is held on all Thursdays in the month of Mārgaśira. The main feature of this *vrata* is that the goddess is invoked on a Māṇa (a measure) of new grains. On this occasion, the depiction of tiny footprints of Lakṣmī in the *ālpanā* paintings is considered particularly auspicious. Women of all castes can worship the goddess by observing this simple *vrata* of Lakṣmī. The story associated with this is given in Oriya *Lakṣmī Purāṇa* of Balarāma Dāsa<sup>29</sup> who flourished during the reign of Pratāparudradeva ( 16th century A.D. ). The main outline of the story is that Lakṣmī once received homage from a Cāṇḍāla

26 *JBORS*, Vol. IV, Part I, pp. 162 ff.

27 Cf. *vijaye labhate lakṣmīm maraṇe ca sur-āṅganāḥ | kṣaṇa-dhvaṁsini kāye=’smīn kā cintā maraṇe raṇe ||* (*Hariharacaturaṅgam*, Madras Government Oriental Series, No. XVII, p. 218).

28 For details, vide N. Tripathi, ‘The Mahā-Lakṣmī Pūjā’, *Man in India*, Vol. XVI, 1936, No. 1, pp. 38 ff.

29 Balarāma Dāsa, *Lakṣmī Purāṇa* (Oriya), Orissa Kohinoor Press.

woman for which she incurred the displeasure of Balabhadra. Jagannātha endorsed the views of his elder brother and therefore Lakṣmī had to quit the temple. But after her departure, the prosperity and splendour of the temple vanished, and even the two brothers could not get any food to eat. At last they had to appeal to Lakṣmī who gave them food. After reconciliation, the goddess returned to the temple. The story thus emphasises the role of Lakṣmī as the presiding deity of wealth and prosperity.

## Lakṣmī and Sarasvatī in Sanskrit Inscriptions

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The portrayal of the two goddesses, Lakṣmī and Sarasvatī, as they appear in the *namaskāra* stanzas of Sanskrit inscriptions, is supplementary to their description in Indian literature. Only in a few details does their depiction differ, and the difference is interesting as it throws light on the conception of the two goddesses.

In the Vedic literature, the Sarasvatī is a sacred river on the bank of which the Bharatas celebrated many sacrifices, and the river-goddess assumed the character of a sacrificial divinity. That aspect of the goddess is not totally forgotten as late as Vikrama 1411 (1354 A. D.), when Nānāka, a court-poet of king Visaladeva of Gujarāt, eulogised the goddess as follows—"May that Sarasvatī grant you all prosperity, who, pleased with Śiva's, Viṣṇu's and Brahman's prayers, made [the volcanic] Aurva [fire], the [collective] energy, as it were, of all rivers, a captive, trembling in word-fetters in [the middle of] the ocean."<sup>1</sup> The idea of Sarasvatī carrying the *vāḍava* fire to the sea is also noticed in the *Skanda Purāṇa*.<sup>2</sup>

But in making an assessment of the nature of the goddess, we must go back to a date much earlier than 1354 A.D. In the Maihar inscription<sup>3</sup> of the middle of the tenth century A. D., her origin is said to be the lotus-like face of Brahman, on the stage of whose tongue she dances according to another

1 Cf. *Ind. Ant.*, Vol. XI, p. 102.

2 Cf. *Skanda Purāṇa*, Prabhāsa-khaṇḍa, verse 33.

3 *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XXXV, p. 175.

epigraph.<sup>4</sup> The concept of the goddess as the spirit of learning is found in the Chebrolu inscription (1213 A. D.) of Jaya, which invokes the goddess as the divine ambrosial flow of learning.<sup>5</sup> The Garavapadu grant (1260 A. D.) of Kākatiya Gaṇapatideva also adores the goddess described as *tejas = sārāsvat-ākhyam*,<sup>6</sup> i.e., the flame called Sārāsvatā. Her abode is said to be the minds of poets in a Jain inscription<sup>7</sup> of 1230 A.D. in the temple of Neminātha on Mt. Abu.

Under the influence of the non-Aryan Mother-goddess cult, Sarasvatī became another aspect of the divine Mother as is evidenced by the well-known eulogy<sup>8</sup>—*Bhadrakālyai namo nityam Sarasvatyai namo namaḥ | veda-vedāṅga-vedānta-vidyāsthānebhya eva ca* || The Kurda inscription (972-73 A. D.) refers to Sarasvatī as a Śakti of one of the trinity.<sup>9</sup> Just as Brahman, Viṣṇu and Śiva came to be regarded as the three aspects of the same god, similarly the three goddesses—Sarasvatī, Śrī and Umā—became three aspects of the same goddess. This we also find poetically expressed in the inscription<sup>10</sup> from Maihar (middle of the tenth century A. D.) referred to above—‘the goddess, who is the divine power of the Lotus-born, who is Kamalā in Viṣṇu’s embrace, who is the fair-complexioned one known throughout the world and

4 See the Motupalli pillar inscription of 1244-45 A. D. in *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XII, p. 190.

5 *Ibid.*, Vol. V, p. 144—*par-āmṛta-rasa-syandi srotas = sārāsvatam*.

6 *Ibid.*, Vol. XVIII, p. 350.

7 *Ibid.*, Vol. VIII, No. 21

8 Surendramohan Bhattacharya, *Purohitadarpaṇa*, Part II, p. 213.

9 *Ind. Ant.*, Vol. XII, p. 264—*Śrī-Sarasvaty-Umā-bhāsvad-vallī-samśleṣa-bhūṣitam | bhūṭaye bhavatām bhūyād = aja-kalpataru-trayam* ||

10 *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XXXV, p. 174—*yā Brāhmī Kamalodbhavasya Kamalam Viṣṇoś = ca vakṣa-sthalaṃ deh-ārḍham Giriśasya viśva-mahitā Gaurī jagad-viśrutā | pratyagr-āsthita-sāndra-bimba — piṣṭātaka-sthāsakam s = aiv = āsmin = śikhare girer = bhagavatī nityam sthitā cāruṇi* || In the first foot, D. C. Sircar now suggests the correction *Kamalā Viṣṇoś = ca vakṣa-sthale*.

worshipped as half the body of Giriśa.' She is further described in the said record as throwing out the lunar orb from her toilette-casket.

The Indian literary tradition<sup>1</sup> depicting Sarasvatī and Lakṣmī as the two daughters of the Divine Mother Durgā is not echoed by any inscription.

As Sarasvatī, however, the Mother is eminently the bestower of learning, wisdom and poetic grace. Hence the Nāgpur stone inscription<sup>2</sup> of Vikrama 1161 has at the beginning—

*Oṃ namo Bhāratyai |*

*prasād-audārya-mādhurya-samādhi-samat-ādayaḥ |*

*yuvayor = ye guṇāḥ santi Vāgdevyau te = 'pi santu naḥ ||*

*Vāgdevyau* in the dual number is very interesting. Nowhere else in literature do we find such duplication of *Vāgdevī*. According to Kielhorn,<sup>3</sup> the expression refers to the two goddesses Sarasvatī and Durgā. But such ascription of the qualities of Bhāratī to Durgā also does not appear to be traceable elsewhere. According to the *Devī Purāṇa*,<sup>4</sup> Sarasvatī is another name of Devī Bhagavatī Durgā. But her nature is quite different from that of Durgā. According to the *Skanda*<sup>5</sup> and *Padma*<sup>6</sup> *Purāṇas*, Sarasvatī and Gāyatrī were the two wives of Brahman. The two goddesses also have some similarity of nature. Hence *Vāgdevyau* in the Nāgpur stone inscription may refer to Sarasvatī and Gāyatrī.\*

Sarasvatī's relation with Nārāyaṇa has been admitted in

1 Cf. Nārāyaṇadeva's *Padmā Purāṇa* (Calcutta University ed.), pp. 4-5; 'Mahiṣ-mardinī Rūp-dhāraṇ' in Mukundarām's *Caṇḍīmaṅgal*, ed. Srikumar Bandyopadhyay, p. 286.

2 *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. II, p. 182.

3 *Loc. cit.*

4 *Devī Purāṇa*, Chap. XVI

5 *Skanda Purāṇa*, Brahma-Khaṇḍa, Setu. 40.

6 *Padma Purāṇa*, Uttara-khaṇḍa, 111.

\* [ See article entitled 'Ardhanārī-Narāyaṇa' below.—Ed. ]

the Khalari stone inscription,<sup>7</sup> dated Vikrama 1471 (1414 A.D.), of the reign of Haribrahmadeva, and also in the eulogy<sup>8</sup> of Bhaṭṭa Bhavadeva Bālabalabhibhujāṅga in which she jealously taunts her husband for his dalliance with Lakṣmī. Elsewhere she is said to be averse to people endowed with Śrī.<sup>9</sup>

According to the *Devībhāgavata*,<sup>10</sup> Sarasvatī originated from the tip of Kṛṣṇa's tongue, an idea which is absent in the inscriptions. She later became Kṛṣṇa's wife. According to the same source,<sup>11</sup> once in a quarrel with her co-wife Gaṅgā, she was cursed that she would have to be born in Bhārata and become the beloved wife (Brāhmī) of the god Brahman. In literature,<sup>12</sup> she is *caturmukha-mukh-āmbhoja-vana-haṁsa-vadhū*, i.e., the spouse of the goose\* that dwells in the cluster of lotuses which are the faces of Caturmukha (Brahman). The Karanbel stone inscription<sup>13</sup> of Jayasīma describes the goddess as *caturvṛtti*, i.e., the presiding deity of the four arts, viz., *nr̥tya*, *gīta*, *vādyā* and *kāvya*. The four arts flow in four streams, hence the goddess is *caturgati*.<sup>14</sup> The identity of the

7 See *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. II, p. 230—*hārā Nārāyaṇasy=orasi rahasi raṇat-kañkaṇā yad-bhujāḥ syuḥ sadyaḥ sat-kāvya-siddhyai sphuratu kavi-mukh-āmbhoruḥ Bhārati sā*.

8 *Ibid.*, Vol. VI, p. 205—

*Gāḍh-opagūdha-Kamalā-kuca-kumbha-patra-  
mudr-āṅkitena vapuṣā pariripsamānaḥ |  
mā lupyatām=abhinavā vana-mālik=eti  
Vāgdevatopahasito='stu Hariḥ śrīye vaḥ ||*

9 Cf. *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XII, p. 13—*śrīmatā yā virodhinī* in the Chatsa (near Jaipur) inscription of Bālāditya.

10 *Devībhāgavata*, IX. 1, 2, 4.

11 *Ibid.*, IX. 8.

12 *Kāvyaḍarśa*, I. 1.

\* [ 'The female goose'.—Ed.]

13 *Ind. Ant.*, Vol. XVIII, p. 216.

14 Or, the final goal of the four kinds of artists.

spirit of all the arts has been emphasized in the *rasa* theory of *Kāvya* as well.

Like *Sarasvatī*, the goddess *Lakṣmī*, as *Śrī*, was unconnected with *Viṣṇu* in the Vedic times. When exactly she came to be regarded as the consort of *Viṣṇu* cannot be determined with precision. The *Junāgaḍh* rock inscription<sup>15</sup> of *Skandagupta* (5th century A. D.) describes *Viṣṇu* as the perpetual abode of the goddess *Lakṣmī*.

In the inscriptions, *Lakṣmī*, as in the *Kāvya*s and *Purāṇa*s, is also a co-wife of *Sarasvatī*, jealously guarding her husband's attention.<sup>16</sup> However, the goddess of wealth is as beautiful as that of learning. Even the splendour of the feet of *Nārāyaṇa* is doubled by their contact with the hands of *Lakṣmī* whose abode is the lotus.<sup>17</sup> *Sarasvatī*, too, is described as the idol of ecstasy, frequenting the paths of the heart of the world, delighting only in visiting clusters of lotuses, moist with tasting the sweet ambrosia flowing out of the moon.<sup>18</sup>

According to the *Devībhāgavata*,<sup>19</sup> *Lakṣmī* assumes different forms to different worshippers. In a palace, she resides in

15 Cf. D. C. Sircar, *Select Inscriptions*, Vol. I, p. 307.

16 Cf. Chatsu Inscription of *Bālāditya* (*Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XII, p. 13)—*Tyaktv=āsūn priya-viprayoga-vidhurā gopyo divaṃ yā yayus=tā etās=tava pūrvavad-rata-sukhaṃ pratyāgatāḥ sevītum | ity=uktaḥ phaṇinaḥ phaṇāmaṇi-gaṇe dīṣṭv=ātmano vimbitān yaḥ serṣaṃ Ramayā Murārīr=avatāt pratyāyayan=vaḥ sa tām ||*

17 Cf. Anbil plates of *Sundara-cola* (*Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XV, p. 58)—*Lakṣmī-bharttuś=carāṇa-nalina-dvandvam=ātārakam vo diśyāl=Lakṣmīm kamala-nīlayā-bhūtadhātṛi-kar-ābjaiḥ | yat-samparka-dviguṇa-janitām kāntim=uccair=dadhānam yad=vā Śambhoḥ kara-sarasijeṣv=indu-līlām dadhātī ||*

18 Cf. *Rajahmundry Museum plates of Telugu-cola Annadeva* (*Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XXVI, p. 41)—

*ānanda-mūrtir=akhil-āntara-mārga-vṛttir=*

*ambhoruh-aika-vana-saṇcarāṇ-ollasantī |*

*ā ā dīt-endu-v galan-madhur-āmṛt-ārdrā*

*sā yogi-vandya-vibhavā bhavatāt prasannā. ||*

royal splendour as the Rājālakṣmī ; to a house-holder, she is Gṛhalakṣmī or house-wife, while to the merchant, she is the presiding deity of trade and commerce. The commercial aspect of Lakṣmī is emphasized in the saying *vāṇijye vasati Lakṣmīs = tad-ardham kṛṣi-karmāṇi*. Later on the goddess came to be worshipped with paddy-corn and cowrie-shells which, perhaps, are reminiscent of her agrarian and commercial associations. But the inscriptions bear no trace either of the paddy-corn or the cowrie-shells or of her mercantile association. Lakṣmī is here just the aura of wealth or Śrī, born of the ocean of milk, and bestower of all happiness, but not of *mokṣa*, which her co-wife Bhārati, called *yogī-vandya-vibhavā*<sup>20</sup> (i.e., whose splendour is worshipped by the ascetics), and *mokṣa-mahāphala-janani*<sup>21</sup> (i.e., the deliverer of the great fruit of *mokṣa*), has in her power to give.

20 See *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XXVI, p. 41. See also p. 110, note 18 above.

21 *Ind. Ant.*, Vol. XVII, p. 228.



### III

## Gajalakṣmī on Seals

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The Gajalakṣmī motif, i.e. the goddess Lakṣmī being anointed by two elephants, is a feature of Indian art from remote antiquity and has received detailed notice in iconographic texts.<sup>1</sup> The motif has been represented in the early Buddhist art of Bharhut, Sanchi, Bodhgaya, and elsewhere,<sup>2</sup> though the possibility of the Buddhists appropriating this motif to depict Māyādevī (Buddha's mother) being given bath by two nāgas at the time of her delivering the child Siddhārtha (Buddha) cannot be ruled out.<sup>3</sup> Foucher's view<sup>4</sup> that Gajalakṣmī has its prototype in Māyā is generally unacceptable to scholars as the antiquity of the concept of the former goes to an earlier period than the latter.<sup>5</sup>

1 *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa* (G. O. S., No. CXXX, Baroda, 1958), III, 82.7—*āvarjita-ghaṭam kāryam tat-piṣṭhe kuñjara-dvayam*; *Matsya Purāṇa*, 261. 46—

*Karibhyām snāpyamān=āsau bhṛṅgārābhyām=anekaśah/*

*prakṣālayantau kariṇau bhṛṅgārābhyām tath=āparau/*

Cf. also *Caturvargacintāmaṇi*, *Vrata-khaṇḍa*, p. 76—*padmasthā padma-hastā ca gaj-otkṣipta-ghaṭa-plutā*.

2 V. S. Agrawala opines that even the *stūpas* were erected due to the common efforts of all people, irrespective of their faith (*Bhāratiya Kālā*, p. 161).

3 Marshall, J., *The Monuments of Sanchi*, p. 96, note 1. Motichandra also holds a similar view ('Our Lady of Beauty and Abundance—Padmā-Śrī', *Nehru Abhinandan Granth*, 1949, p. 511). For an opposite view, see Majumdar, N. G., *A Guide to the Sculptures in the Indian Museum*, Pt. 1, 1937, p. 21, note 1.

4 Foucher, A., *On the Iconography of the Buddha's Nativity* (MASI, No. 46), pp. 2 and 21.

5 Marshall, *op. cit.*, p. 96, note 1.

# 1. Description of the Seals.

Below is given a detailed description of seals bearing the Gajalakṣmī motif.

(a) *Basarh Seals*. No. 3 in Bloch's list<sup>6</sup> of the Basarh seals shows Lakṣmī standing in the midst of a group of trees with elephants pouring water over her and two attendants holding objects resembling money-bags (fig. 1). There are no attendants on No. 4 of the same list.<sup>7</sup> On either side of her are shown lotus flowers and buds (fig. 2). No. 8<sup>8</sup> also shows a similar device. In No. 5,<sup>9</sup> she holds a flower in her left hand and her attendants pour out coins (fig. 3). No. 6<sup>10</sup> bears the same device ; but here the elephants are shown as standing on flowers. Lakṣmī is shown wearing *dhotī* and a *mukūṭa* and holds a lotus stalk in her left hand, her right hand being in the *varada-mudrā*. A kneeling male attendant wearing a knob-shaped *mukūṭa* on the head and showering coins with one hand from the bag<sup>11</sup> in front of him appears on either side of her. No. 7<sup>12</sup> in the same list is fragmentary, but seems to represent a device similar to No. 6. No. 9<sup>13</sup> shows Gajalakṣmī with attendants and money-bags holding a flower in her left hand. No. 10<sup>14</sup> bears the main device ; other details are not clear. No. 11<sup>15</sup> has the main device with bags, but

6 *ASI, AR*, 1903-04, p. 107.

7 *Ibid.*, p. 107, Pl. XL. 10.

8 *Ibid.*, p. 108.

9 *Ibid.*, p. 107. Nine specimens are known.

10 *Ibid.*, p. 107, Pl. XL. 11. Twelve specimens of this are known.

11 J. N. Banerjea points out that in shape the money-bags are similar to the bags shown under a *kalpadruma* capital found at Besnagar (*The Development of Hindu Iconography*, p. 194).

12 *ASI, AR*, 1903-04, p. 107, No. 7.

13 *Ibid.*, p. 108.

14 *Loc. cit.*

15 *Loc. cit.*

without attendants. On No. 13,<sup>16</sup> we have attendants standing and pouring out coins from the pots held in their hands and Lakṣmī holds a flower in her hand. On No. 20,<sup>17</sup> she holds an eight-petalled flower and the attendants hold in their hands pots or bags with mouth downward and pour out coins. In No. 21,<sup>18</sup> Lakṣmī is shown holding a lotus in the left hand and the right probably in the *varada-mudrā*. The attendants, standing with heads bent backward and one leg forward, guard the jar with one of their hands on it. Lakṣmī wears ear-rings, bangles and *dhotī*,\* the folds of which are clear near the feet. On No. 22,<sup>19</sup> the attendants pour out coins from pots, and Lakṣmī holds a seven-petalled flower. Likewise, on No. 23,<sup>20</sup> the attendant figures pour out coins.

One important Gajalakṣmī sealing<sup>21</sup> was unearthed at the same site in the excavations conducted by Spooner. There is a *śaṅkha* to her proper left, and perhaps a *pūrṇa-ghaṭa* on the proper right. She wears a *dhotī* and an *uttariya*, the ends of which are shown floating in the air, and *kuṇḍalas* hang from her ears.

(b) *Bhita Seals*. In the Gupta sealing No. 32 in Marshall's list,<sup>22</sup> Lakṣmī is shown standing, facing. The elephants do not stand on lotuses. The right hand of the goddess is raised in the *abhaya* pose, while the left rests on

16 *Ibid.*, p. 108, Pl. XL. 7.

17 *Ibid.*, p. 109, Pl. XL. 8.

18 *Ibid.*, p. 109, Pl. XL. 13.

\*[It is probably better to say that the goddess is wearing her *sārī* in the fashion of a *dhotī*.—Ed.]

19 *Ibid.*, p. 109.

20 *Loc. cit.*

21 *Ibid.*, 1013-14, p. 134, No. 200, Pl. XLVII.

22 *Ibid.*, 1911-12, p. 52, Pl. XVIII. 32.

what looks like a bird, perhaps Garuḍa.<sup>23</sup> The goddess wears *kuṇḍalas*, bangles and *sāri*. The representation on No. 34 in the same list<sup>24</sup> is similar. In No. 35,<sup>25</sup> she stands on a lotus and holds lotus in the right hand. The dwarfish attendants are shown in crouching position on lotus,<sup>26</sup> with hands folded. The elephants also stand on lotuses (fig. 5). In No. 42,<sup>27</sup> she stands on a fully blossomed lotus, holding a *śaṅkha* in the right hand and a bird (Garuḍa ?) in the left. The attendants are conspicuous by their absence. There are vases from which their contents ( perhaps coins ) flow down (fig. 6).

(c) *Nalanda Seals*. A few sealings from Nalanda also portray the Gajalakṣmī device. In the sealing of the *Kumārā-mātya* of the Nagara-bhukti<sup>29</sup> (fig. 7), curiously enough, the *gajas* have been shown like Gaṇeśa figures in Indian Art—elephant-headed and human-bodied. There are no attendant figures. Further, these composite figures seem to be offering *kamala-nālas* to the goddess rather than bathing her from the *ghaṭas* containing water. The goddess is haloed and wears a knob-shaped *mukuṭa*, ear-rings and necklace. The folds of her *sāri* are clear. The round-shaped vessels of riches are to be seen. The goddess, the composite figures and vessels of riches all appear on a pedestal. The Gajalakṣmī figure on the

23 J. N. Banerjea thinks that what has been taken as bird by Marshall may, in fact, be a chowrie held downwards, its handle looking like the neck of a bird (*DHI*, p. 196). The possibility of its being a representation of lotus bud cannot be precluded.

24 *ASI,AR*, 1911-12, p. 58, Pl. XVIII. 34. The seal is shown upside down on the Pl.

25 *Ibid.*, p. 53, Pl. XIX. 35.

26 Cf. attendant figures similarly disposed in *ASI,AR*, 1903-04, No. 8.

27 *Ibid.*, 1911-12, p. 54, Pl. XIX.

28 Marshall, however, suggested flower or water (*loc. cit.*). See, however, Banerjea, *DHI*, p. 197.

29 *MA SI*, No. 66, p. 53, No. 810.

sealing of the office of the Rājagṛha-viṣaya<sup>30</sup> is haloed. The attendants are disposed in normal manner. A flag-staff in a pot and flowers occur on the sides. Lakṣmī in the sealing of the *Kumārāmātya* of the Magadha-bhukti<sup>31</sup> stands on a lotus and holds a lotus stalk in the left hand, her right hand is in the *varada-mudrā*. There are two attendants and the elephants stand on pedestals. On another *Kumārāmātya-ādhikaraṇa* sealing,<sup>32</sup> we find Lakṣmī seated on lotus and the elephants seem to be offering a lotus each, while both the attendants have one of their hands on a vessel of riches. Lakṣmī herself holds a lotus in her left hand and the position of her right hand suggests as if she were about to open the lid of the vessel.

(d) *Rajghat Seals*. The Bhārat Kalā Bhavan No. 6375 shows Gajalakṣmī haloed and standing on lotus. She holds a lotus in her left hand, the elephants anointing her form a sort of canopy over her head with their trunks. Below their trunks are shown jars, with their mouth downwards (fig. 8). No. 6376 in the same collection shows Lakṣmī standing with attendants. Faint traces of the elephants performing *abhiṣeka* are noticeable (fig. 9). A similar device also occurs on No. 6478 of the same collection.

(e) *Kauśāmbī Seals*. Gajalakṣmī occurs on a Ghoṣitārāma monastery sealing restruck with the legend *Toramāṇa* (fig. 10), without attendants. There seems to be a *Garuḍa* figure on the right of the goddess. The goddess and the elephants stand on lotuses; in the latter case, the long stalks of lotuses have been shown.

(f) *Ahichchhatra Seals*. On a sealing from Ahichchhatra in the Antiquity Section of the Archaeological Survey of India,

30 *Ibid.*, p. 49, No. S. 1, 794.

31 Indian Museum No. 9478-A 15039; *MA SI*, No. 66, p. 51, Nos. 813, 817, 808, 691 and also Pl. V. 1.

32 *MA SI*, No. 66, p. 42, S. 1, 784, Pl. V. 1.

New Delhi, Lakṣmī stands on a lotus, with lotuses on either side. She holds a lotus in her left hand and doles out coins with the right. The attendants, down on their knees, are shown in the *namaskāra-mudrā* (fig. 11). Another sealing from the same site and in the same collection (No. A.C. II, 4353) shows Lakṣmī standing on a lotus with lotuses all around. The attendants are seated on their knees (fig. 4). The treasure pots are conspicuous by their absence. Likewise, one of the two impressions on A. C. 4448 shows the Gajalakṣmī device.

(g) *Eran Seals*. The same device has been depicted very artistically on a sealing recently unearthed in the excavations at Eran. The left hand of the goddess rests on her thigh and the right holds a lotus stalk. The *gajas* stand on fully blossomed lotuses. The goddess, however, does not stand on lotus, but simply on a pedestal. There are no attendant figures (fig. 12).

(h) *Seals of the Kings of Śarabhapura*. Gajalakṣmī occurs on the Pipardula copper-plate seal of king Narendra,<sup>32a</sup> the Arang copper-plate seal of Mahā-Jayarāja,<sup>33</sup> the Raipur copper-plate seal of Mahā-Sudevarāja<sup>33a</sup> and on the Thakurdiya copper-plate seal of Mahā-Pravararāja.<sup>33b</sup> They show Lakṣmī standing and the elephants standing on lotuses; a lotus is to be seen on her proper right and a *śankha* on her proper left (fig. 13).\*

(i) *Tippera Copper-plate Seal*. The Tippera copper-

32a *IHQ*, Vol. XIX, pp. 13 ff. and Pl. facing p. 144.

33 *CII*, Vol. III, No. 40, p. 191, Pl. XXVI.

33a *Ibid.*, p. 196, Pl. XXVII.

33b *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XXII, Pl. facing p. 23.

\*[All the records of the Śarabhapuriyas, including the above, bear the same representation on their seals.—Ed.]

plate seal<sup>34</sup> shows Gajalakṣmī with two attendants pouring out the contents from the jars. Lakṣmī stands on lotus. One of her hands is raised and holds something (perhaps a *bilva* fruit), while the other is in the *varada-mudrā*. Lotus flowers and buds flank her on both sides (fig. 14).

(j) *Vadrāntapa-viṣaya Seal*. Lakṣmī is shown standing on a lotus on the Vadrāntapa-viṣaya seal.<sup>35</sup> The two elephants perform *kumbh-ābhiṣeka*. There is a *caitya*-like device at each corner (fig. 15).\*

## 2. Discussion.

(a) *Gajalakṣmī and the Gupta Rulers*. It was under the Imperial Guptas, who styled themselves *Paramabhāgavata*, that, for the first time, Gajalakṣmī was adopted as a symbol of the administrative offices. The motif, however, was used as a coin-device by both indigenous and foreign rulers a few centuries earlier<sup>36</sup> and also subsequently.<sup>37</sup> The Guptas did not favour this motif on their coins (though they did represent Lakṣmī without elephants).<sup>38</sup> According to Dikshitar,<sup>39</sup> the

34 *ASI, AR*, 1903-04, pp. 120-22, fig. 19 on Pl. 121. The plate is of a later period (9th or 10th century), while the seal, as is evident from the palaeography of the legend *Kumārāmātya-ādihikaraṇasya* thereon, is of an earlier period. [There are inaccuracies. See *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XV, pp. 301 ff. and Plate; also *IHQ*, Vol. XXIII, p. 224.—Ed.]

35 *JRAS*, 1914, p. 40 and illustration on p. 402.

\*[There are omissions. See, e.g., *IHQ*, *op. cit.*, pp. 221 ff.; above, p. 94.—Ed.]

36 The Kauśāmbī coins of c. 3rd century B.C. (Allan, Catalogue, *Anc. Ind.*, p. 149, Pl. XX. 15); coins of Viśākhadeva (*ibid.*, p. 131, Pl. XVI. 14), Śivadatta (*ibid.*, p. 134, Pl. XLIX. 5), etc., of Ayodhyā (1st century B. C.); on the coins of foreign rulers like Azilises (Whitehead, Catalogue, Vol. I, p. 132, Pl. XIII. 332), Rajuvula (Allan, *op. cit.*, p. 187, Pl. XXVI. 1), Śoḍāsa (*ibid.*, p. 190, Pl. XXVI. 16), see also *DHI*, p. 110 and note.

37 Coins of Śaśāṅka (Allan, Catalogue, Gupta, Pl. XXIII. 14-16) and Jaya (*ibid.*, Pl. XXIV. 7-8).

38 We have the elephant-rider type coins of Kumāragupta I.

39 *Gupta Polity*, p. 157.

occurrence of Gajalakṣmī on the *Kumārāmātya* seals indicates that the *Kumārāmātyas* were treasury officers. The motif, undoubtedly, is most commonly found on the *Kumārāmātya* seals;<sup>40</sup> but it also occurs on those of other offices like the *viṣay-ādhikaraṇa*<sup>41</sup> and *uparik-ādhikaraṇa*<sup>42</sup> and even on the seals of feudatory kings<sup>43</sup> who cannot be taken as treasury officers. We have noticed that the device is portrayed on terracotta and copper seals from Madhya Pradesh (Eran, Arang, etc.), Uttar Pradesh (Bhita, Rajghat, Kauśāmbī, etc.), Bihar (Basarh and Nalanda) and Bengal (Tippera). The area covered by these seals coincides, more or less, with the Gupta empire in its heyday.

(b) *Lakṣmī Figures*. Lakṣmī is shown as standing or otherwise, holding or not holding in her hand (or hands) a lotus flower, with or without foliage. She is shown variously—*padmasthā* (on lotus), *padma-hastā* (lotus in hand) and *padma-vāsini* (resting amidst lotuses), and sometimes in a combination of these.

In sculptural representations and on coins, the goddess is mostly shown as standing; but examples of the sitting posture are also known.<sup>44</sup> She has, however, been invariably shown as standing on the seals. On glyptics, she is mostly shown as wearing *dhotī* and sometimes also *uttariya*, with necklace, earrings and bangles as ornaments which can be seen on some.

40 E.g., Nos. 3, 4, 6, 8 and 22 of Bloch's list of Basarh seals (*ASI, AR*, 1903-04); No. 32 of Spooner's list of the seals from the same site (*ibid.*, 1913-14); Nos. 32 and 35 of Marshall's list of Bhita seals (*ibid.*, 1911-12); Nos. 813, 817, 808, 891, 810, etc., of Nalanda seals (*MASI*, No. 66), etc. All these have been described above.

41 *JRAS*, 1914, p. 401; *MASI*, No. 66, p. 49.

42 *ASI, AR*, 1903-04, p. 109.

43 *CII*, Vol. III, No. 40, p. 191, Pl. XXVI.

44 Marshall, *op. cit.*, II, Pl. XXV; *ibid.*, Pl. XLI; see on coins, Allan, *CCAI*, Pl. XLIII. 5 (coin of Śivadatta).



In many cases, the details are not very clear owing to the small size and defaced surface of the glyptics. In other modes of representation also, she is shown well-dressed and decked with ornaments. Texts dealing with her iconography also prescribe that she should be well-dressed and wear various types of ornaments.<sup>45</sup> Her physique on seals, as also in other types of representation, is characterised with developed breasts, narrow waist and prominent buttocks—all symbolic of the Indian concept of beauty, prosperity and fertility for which the goddess is so well known.<sup>46</sup>

The glyptics invariably portray her as two-handed. The iconographic texts, however, speak of her with two, four and even more hands.<sup>47</sup> In sculpture, the two-handed variety has

45 Cf. *Amśumadbhedāgama* and *Śilparatna* (Gopinatha Rao, T. A., *EHI*, I (ii), pp. 373-74) ; *Matsya P.*, 261.42—

*padma-svastika-śaṅkhair=vā bhūṣitā kuṇḍal-ālakaiḥ |*  
*kañcuka-baddha-gātrī ca hārabhūṣau payodharau |*  
*nāga-hast-opamau bāhū keyūra-kaṭak-ojjaḥvalau |*

Even in the Jain *Kalpasūtra* (36), it is said that Trīśalā, mother of Mahāvīra, saw in one of her dreams, Lakṣmī decked with garland of *dināras* and anointed by elephants (vide *Jaina Sūtras*, translated by H. Jacobi, Oxford, 1884, p. 232).

46 In the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* (XI. 4. 3. 1ff.), for example, she is said to possess power, prestige, universal kingdom and many other things that a man would like to possess in this world. The same text says that the gods deprived her of these, and that she could regain these only after offering oblations to gods. This is taken by some as suggestive of the entry of this goddess from the Nonāryan to the Āryan fold.

47 The *Viṣṇudharmottara* (3. 82) says that, while with Hari, she should be two-handed and when worshipped alone, four-handed. The *Amśumadbhedāgama* (vide Gopinatha Rao, *op. cit.*, I. II, Appendix C, p. 133) prescribes the two-handed variety. The *Śilparatna* (Gopinatha Rao, *op. cit.*, p. 374) refers to both varieties. The *Matsya* (261.43) and *Agni* (50.15) *Purāṇas* refer to the two-handed variety. The *Devīmahātmya* of the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa* describes her Mahālakṣmī form as eighteen-handed (vide Banerjee, J. N., *op. cit.*, p. 373).

been favoured, though four-handed figures are also met with.<sup>48</sup> The latter type is a development of the post-Gupta period. The iconographic texts prescribe attributes for all her hands, be they two or four.<sup>49</sup> On glyptics, however, she is generally shown as holding a lotus in one hand and the other in the *varada-mudrā* or *abhaya-mudrā* or just hanging down.

In certain Gajalakṣmī figures in sculptures, the goddess is shown variously, e.g. pressing her breasts (the idea being that of the mother rich in milk) with one hand and holding cloth in another,<sup>50</sup> one hand on the hip and the other raised,<sup>51</sup> lotus in one hand and cloth in another,<sup>52</sup> and with folded hands.<sup>53</sup> In sculpture, the goddess and the elephants are sometimes shown on lotuses springing from a *pūrṇa-ghaṭa*.<sup>54</sup> The glyptics as well as the coins lack this feature.

(c) *Attendant Figures*. The attendants are variously disposed—standing or sitting in the *namaskāra-mudrā*, guarding vessels of riches, pouring out coins from jars kept on a pedestal or bare ground, or simply looking at the goddess as if waiting for her command.

48 E.g., Gopinatha Rao; *op. cit.*, I (II), CXI.

49 The *Viṣṇudharmottara* (3. 82. 2.) says that, when two-handed, she should hold lotus in both hands, but when four-handed, lotus, *aṃṣītaghaṭa*, *śaṅkha* and *bilva* (*ibid.*, 3. 82. 37). The *Agni* (50. 15) and *Matsya* (260. 43) prescribe a lotus and *śrīphala* in her two hands. The *Aṃśu-madbhedāgama* (Gopinatha Rao, *op. cit.*, Appendix C, p. 133) and the *Silparatna* (*ibid.*, p. 374) say that she should hold a *śrīphala* and lotus. The latter also says that in a four-handed variety, the right hands should hold a lotus with long stalk and a *bilva*-fruit and the two left ones an *aṃṣītaghaṭa* and a *śaṅkha*.

50 Barua, B. M., *Barhut*, Vol. III, Pl. LXVII. 80.

51 E. g., Marshall, *op. cit.*, II, Pl. XI.

52 E. g., *ibid.*, Pl. XXIV.

53 E.g., *ibid.*, III, Pl. LXXXIII. 49.

54 *Ibid.*, II, Pl. XLI.

The attendants are to be identified with Yakṣas whose overlord is Kubera.<sup>55</sup> As custodians of riches, they provide an appropriate combination with Lakṣmī, the goddess of wealth and prosperity, the underlying idea being that the Yakṣas as custodians of riches rewarded those specially favoured by the goddess at her command.<sup>56</sup> Literary<sup>57</sup> and sculptural<sup>58</sup> evidences reveal her close associations with Kubera in particular and the Yakṣas in general. The Abhiṣekalakṣmī representation on coins is, however, conspicuous by the absence of attendant figures.

Some texts,<sup>59</sup> dealing with the iconographical features of this goddess, prescribe her representation to be attended by maidens with *cāmaras* in their hands. There are sculptural

55 Bloch identified the attendants as Kubera figures. It would be strange to depict two figures of Kubera on a single seal in one and the same context. J. N. Banerjea (*DHI*, p. 195) has convincingly identified these as Yakṣas.

56 Cf. *DHI*, p. 195.

57 In the *Mahābhārata* (Critical ed., 2. 10. 18), she is present at the court of Kubera along with Nalakubara. She is associated with Kubera again at another place (3. 164. 13) in the same text and is described as united with Lakṣmī (*vide* Banerjea, *DHI*, p. 372). In the *Rāmāyaṇa* (V. 7. 14), she is said to have been represented on the car of Kubera with lotus in her hand. In *Jātaka* No. 382 (*Siri-Kālakaṇṇī Jātaka*), she has been referred to as the daughter of Dhātaraṭṭha, Regent of the East, who is represented as a Yakṣa in a Bharhut sculpture (Coomaraswamy, *Yakṣas*, II, fig. 3). According to the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa* (*vide* *DHI*, pp. 105 and 195), the eight *nidhis* which are particularly associated with Kubera are the *ādihāra* of *padminīvidyā* whose presiding deity is the goddess Lakṣmī.

58 E. g., in a statue in the University Museum, Philadelphia, Lakṣmī is shown with Gaṇeśa and Kubera (Coomaraswamy, *Yakṣas*, Pt. II, Pl. VIII, fig. 1) and in a Sanchi sculpture with the Yakṣa-mithuna (Marshall, *op. cit.*, III, Pl. LXXXIII, 49).

59 E.g., *Matsya P.*, 261. 45 ; also *Śilparatna* as referred to by Gopinatha Rao, *op. cit.*, I (II), p. 374.

representations<sup>60</sup> actually depicting female figures attending her. However, the seals, whenever depicting the attendant figures, invariably show them as males, one on either side. The obvious intention was to depict the figures of Lakṣmī and the Yakṣas together, both symbolic of wealth and prosperity.

On the *Kumārāmātya* sealing of the Nagara-bhukti, instead of the elephants and Yakṣa figures, we have Gaṇeśa-like<sup>61</sup> (elephant-headed human) figures, one on either side, which seems to portray the *gaja* and Yakṣa figures into one, a fact supported by the disposition of these figures. Normally, the elephants stand higher than the shoulders of the goddess; but the composite figures have been depicted here almost at a level midway between the elephant and Yakṣa figures on other seals. Their trunks, however, go high up.

Iconographic texts do not mention Garuḍa in the context of this goddess. Its presence on seals seems to be motivated by its being the *vāhana* of Viṣṇu, her consort. The concept of the owl as her *vāhana* is of much later origin.

(d) *Elephants*. There is considerable variety in the depiction of the elephant figures, either standing on flowers or otherwise, bathing the goddess with water jars held in their trunks or offering *kamala-nālas*.

The elephants are also symbolic of prosperity and regal pomp. Airāvata, the elephant *par excellence*, was also one of the fourteen objects, including Lakṣmī, obtained from the churning of ocean, and it is said that Lakṣmī left the wicked

60 E.g., Gopinatha Rao, *op. cit.*, I (II), Pl. IX (from Ellora) and Pl. CIX (from Mahabalipuram).

61 Coomaraswamy (*Yakṣas*, I, p. 7) points out that Gaṇeśa himself was a Yakṣa. For an elephant-headed Yakṣa from Amaravati, see Coomaraswamy, *ibid.*, Pl. XXIII, fig. 1.

asuras and went to Indra,<sup>62</sup> to whom also belongs the elephant Airāvata. For symbolism one would have sufficed, or else, four (representing the four quarters) would have been apt as noticed, though rarely, in some mediaeval sculptures.<sup>63</sup> The depiction of two elephants seems to be for the sake of symmetry.

Though apparently incongruous, the depiction of elephants standing on frail lotus flowers, is also met with in sculpture<sup>64</sup> (but not on coins), and emphasises that, like the goddess, the elephants too are connected with water. The elephants, symbolic of glory and royalty, might have even once represented the goddess theriomorphically and the *śrīvatsa* aniconically, as can be inferred from the three Madras Museum statues depicting figures of the goddess within the framework of the *śrīvatsa*,<sup>65</sup> and both might have been retained as accessories in her anthropomorphic representations, almost like the seat, the Bodhi tree, etc., which once symbolised the Buddha, were retained even after his anthropomorphic representation came in vogue.

(e) *Lotus, Conch-shell, etc.* Born in water, the lotus too emphasises the association of the goddess with water. The close association of the goddess with lotus is met with even in the *Śrī-sūkta*<sup>66</sup> though the conception seems to go back to the pre-Aryan period.<sup>67</sup> We come across the goddess with lotus in hand, lotus as the seat and lotuses around. In fact, Lakṣmī without lotus is unthinkable. The *śaṅkha* too has

62 *Mbh.*, XII. 218.

63 Gopinatha Rao, *op. cit.*, I (II), Pl. CX

64 Barua, *op. cit.*, 79-80; Marshall, *op. cit.*, III, Pl. LXXXII, 49.

65 See *DHI.*, p. 375, Pl. XIX, 1-3.

66 Cf. the adjectives *padma-varṇā*, *padma-mālinī*, *padm-ānanā*, *padm-ākṣī*, *padma-saṁbhavā*, etc.

67 Zimmer, H., *Myths and Symbols in Indian Art and Civilization*, p. 90.

its origin in water. We may here refer to a Basarh seal<sup>68</sup> depicting Lakṣmī (with elephants) with *śaṅkha* on a boat seemingly suggesting the personification of wealth and being brought through water-borne trade. Moreover, the lotus and *śaṅkha* are two of the attributes of Viṣṇu, her consort, as also the two *nidhis* of Kubera.<sup>69</sup> The jars symbolise rivers. Water is also a symbol of creation and the goddess is intimately associated with creative energy.

There is a good deal of variety in the depiction of Gajā-lakṣmī on seals. The most elaborate device shows Lakṣmī, and the elephants, water vessels, jars of riches, two attendants and lotus flowers together with stalks, buds and leaves. In some cases, the attendant figures are missing, while, in others, the jars or both the attendants and jars are absent. A comparison of these with sculptural and numismatic depictions as well as iconographic descriptions in texts brings interesting similarities and dissimilarities.<sup>70</sup>

68 *ASI, AR*, 1913-14, pp. 129-30, Pl. XLVI. 93.

69 E.g., *DHI*, p. 105, note.

70 E.g., Coomaraswamy, *op. cit.*, II, p. 14.

## IV

### Lakṣmī on Early Indian Coins\*

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Lakṣmī, the goddess of fortune, wealth and prosperity, may be recognised in many of the female figures depicted on early Indian coins. Her earliest numismatic representation appears to be in the form of Gajalakṣmī. The device shows Lakṣmī usually as standing and rarely as seated cross-legged on a lotus and being anointed by water poured by an elephant standing on a lotus on either side. The device, otherwise known as 'Abhiṣeka of Lakṣmī', typifies the ancient Indian conception of prosperity, and occurs on coins datable between the third century B. C. and the first century A. D.

The earliest known numismatic issue to bear the device of 'Abhiṣeka of Lakṣmī' appears to be an uninscribed copper coin of Kauśāmbī datable to about the third century B. C. Lakṣmī, on the coin, is depicted as standing, although the details are not so clear. The device is seen on the coins of some early Ayodhyā kings who seem to have flourished in the second and first centuries B. C. The coin of Viśākhadeva depicts Lakṣmī as standing, while that of Śivadatta appears to be the only known early issue to depict her as seated. On some coins of Dhanadeva and Vāyudeva also a female figure (Lakṣmī ?) is seen standing on lotus ; but the objects on her sides are not distinct, so that it is not possible to say if they represent elephants in the act of anointing the female figure, who is apparently a goddess.

\*[The revised copy of the article was received in January, 1969.—Ed.]

The most distinct and artistic representation of the standing Gajalakṣmī device is, however, found on the silver coins of the Indo-Scythian king Azilises.

Some of the Mathurā satraps like Rañjuvula and Śoḍāsa also used the Gajalakṣmī device on their coins, although the representation is never so clear as that on the coins of Azilises. That the Gajalakṣmī device was very popular in Indian art in the second and first centuries B. C. is amply demonstrated by the Bharhut and other sculptures. It is, however, curious that the device ceases to occur on coins after the first century A. D.

The more common representation of Lakṣmī on coins is that in which she is seen either as standing or as seated on a lotus with a lotus in her hand. The earliest depiction of this figure is found on some uninscribed coins of Ujjayinī, where she is seen seated, facing, on a lotus.

Lakṣmī standing to front and holding a lotus in her up-lifted right hand was the characteristic local device of the coins of the Hindu rulers of Mathurā. She is seen on the coins of five princes whose names end in *mitra*, viz. Brahmanitra, Dṛḍhamitra, Gomitra, Sūryamitra and Viṣṇumitra, as well as on the coins of six kings whose names end in *datta*, viz. Bhavadatta, Kāmadatta, Puruṣadatta, Rāmadatta, Śeṣadatta and Uttamadatta; besides them, the coin of one Balabhūti also depicts her in the like manner. It is interesting that the same standing figure of Lakṣmī appears also on the obverse of the coins of the Scythian satraps Rañjuvula and Śoḍāsa, which depict the Gajalakṣmī device on the reverse. The figure of standing Lakṣmī is also found on the coins of the satraps Hagāmāsa, Śivaghoṣa and Śivadatta. The device of the standing Lakṣmī, as it occurs on the coins of the Rājanya-janapada, closely resembles that on the Mathurā coins.



The reverse devices of the Pañcāla coins, as shown by Allan, are of considerable iconographic interest. The coins of two of the Pañcāla rulers, viz. Bhadrakhoṣa and Phalgunīmitra, depict a female figure as standing on a lotus. Allan identified the deities on the coins of Bhadrakhoṣa and Phalgunīmitra respectively as Bhadrā and Phalgunī in allusion to the respective king's name. He, however, points out that the figure on Bhadrakhoṣa's coin suggests Lakṣmī. J. N. Banerjea is of the opinion that she is either Lakṣmī or Durgā, associated in one of her aspects with Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa as Ekānamśā or Subhadrā. The female deity on Phalgunīmitra's coin is represented as standing on a lotus and holding a lotus in her hand, suggestive of Lakṣmī. But the peculiarity is that there is a star represented like the sun behind her head and her hair is represented by five flames. J. N. Banerjea has pointed out that the iconography of the female figure is in no way similar to that of Pūrva-Phalgunī and Uttara-Phalgunī as described by Hemādri; on the other hand, the lotus pedestal and the lotus held by the deity would not always go with Lakṣmī unless there are other distinctive marks. It is therefore difficult to say definitely which particular deity is represented in this case—Lakṣmī or the Phalgunī *nakṣatra*.

There is also some doubt about the identification of the goddess on the Kuṇḍa coins, associated with a stag. The goddess is standing on a lotus and is also holding a lotus. S. V. Venkatesvara has pointed out that, in the *Śrī-sūkta* of the *Rgveda-pariśiṣṭa* (17th stanza), Śrī-Lakṣmī is called a moon-like golden-coloured deer decorated with gold and silver ornaments. On the basis of this, J. N. Banerjea suggested that the device on the Kuṇḍa coins may represent both the human and animal forms of the goddess Śrī-Lakṣmī. Alternatively, he points out that if the animal (stag?) refers

to Yakṣa Uṣṭrapada, which was the special object of worship in the land of the Kuṇindas, as referred to in the *Mahāmāyūrī*, and the attendant female figure may or may not stand for Lakṣmī. We, however, prefer to take her as Lakṣmī, particularly because of the occurrence of the so-called *śrīvatsa* symbol, and the cobra symbol that occurs between the horns of the stag, for these often have a Vaiṣṇavite affiliation.

On a unique silver coin of the Yaudheyas in the British Museum is found the figure of the six-headed Kārttikeya on the obverse and that of a female deity standing on a lotus on the reverse. The female figure is taken to be that of Lakṣmī by Allan and Banerjea. But V. S. Agrawala identifies the deity with Devasenā or Śaṣṭhī, the consort of Kārttikeya, as mentioned in the *Mahābhārata*. This may not be unlikely, since apparently the goddess also appears distinctly as a six-headed divinity on a copper coin of the same type in the Indian Museum. Deenabandhu Pandey has recently suggested that the six-headed goddess stands for a combined form of the six Kṛttikās, associated with Kārttikeya, and later on identified with Lakṣmī, Śaṣṭhī and Devasenā.

The Yaudheya copper coins of the post-Kuṣāṇa period depict the figure of Kārttikeya on the obverse and that of a female deity walking to left and holding an uncertain object in her right hand and placing the left hand on her hip, very similar to the representation of Mao or Miṛo on Kuṣāṇa coins. It may be suggested that she stands for Lakṣmī since, on two varieties of this class of coins, the associate symbols are either a flower-vase (*kalasa*) or *śaṅkha* and the so-called *śrīvatsa* symbol, all associated with the Vaiṣṇava cult in which Lakṣmī plays a prominent role.

On two uncertain coins in the British Museum, one having the legend *Jyeṣṭhasa* and the other *Virasenasa*, there is a female

figure standing and holding a stalk of flower growing beside her, suggesting one aspect of Lakṣmī in which she stands on a lotus flower, with lotus flowers and leaves on long stalks spreading on her either side ; cf. the Mohenjo-daro seal representing a tree-goddess standing between the branches of the tree. Allan takes both the figures as Lakṣmī.

The so-called 'Dancing girl' on some coins of Pantaleon and Agathocles has been recognised by Coomaraswamy as Śrī-Lakṣmī, while J. N. Banerjea suggested that she might stand for the Yakṣiṇī Aśvamukhī. Tarn believes that she represents the city-deity of Taxila. Now, the city-goddesses as protectors of cities and maintainers of luck and good fortune were usually identified with Lakṣmī as Nagara-lakṣmī. So it is not unlikely that the female figure stands for the Nagara-lakṣmī ( of Taxila ? ). Similarly, the city-deity of Puṣkalāvati, depicted on a unique gold coin, may stand for Lakṣmī as held by Coomaraswamy, although J. N. Banerjea suggests that she may also stand for Ambikā, since her associate animal is bull on the reverse, connected with the worship of Śiva, current in that region. The same scholar has, however, pointed out in another context that in the *Nārāyaṇastuti*, the Ādyāśakti is praised both as Gaurī-Ambikā and as Nārāyaṇī-Lakṣmī. Now, this duality in her concept might have led to the identification of Ambikā, connected with the Śaiva cult prevalent in that region, with the Nagara-lakṣmī of Puṣkalāvati.

On some coins of Azes, there is a female figure standing on lotus flower and holding a lotus flower in her hand. Since Gardner sees the forepart of a lion beside her, he takes her to be either Pārvatī or Lakṣmī. J. N. Banerjea also is of the opinion that she might stand for Durgā-simhavāhinī. There is, however, no trace of lion in the Punjab Museum coin, and Whitehead describes her as Lakṣmī.

The Kuṣāṇas probably identified their goddess Ardokhsho with Indian Lakṣmī. She is seen holding a cornucopiae instead of lotus and is seated on a high-backed chair on the later Kuṣāṇa coins. This seated Ardokhsho-Lakṣmī type continued to be copied by the foreign successors of the Kuṣāṇas, viz. the Kidāra Kuṣāṇas and the White Hūṇas (Toramāṇa, Mihirakula and some other Ephthalite kings), and visibly influenced the initial issues of the Guptas on whose coins she undoubtedly stands for Lakṣmī. The artistic sense of the Guptas, however, shortly freed her from the crude and stereotyped representation on the foreign issues and very soon she became a full-fledged Indian Lakṣmī, the goddess of beauty and fortune and is seen seated on a full-bloomed lotus instead of the high-backed chair, the traces of which can be noticed on the early issues of Samudragupta.

The goddess on the reverse of the coins of the Candragupta-Kumāradevī type and of the Lion-slayer type of Candragupta II, depicted as seated on a lion, holding a lotus or cornucopiae in her left hand, fillet in her right hand and her feet resting sometimes on lotus, has been usually recognised as Durgā-simhavāhinī. Allan has, however, suggested Lakṣmī-Ambikā and, as J. N. Banerjea has pointed out, the duality in the concept of Gaurī-Nārāyaṇī had probably something to do with the device. He shows that the lion on which the goddess sits is suggestive of her aspect as Gaurī-Ambikā, while the lotus flower and the fillet in her hand represents her Nārāyaṇī-Lakṣmī aspect.

Lakṣmī, the goddess of wealth and fortune, continued to be the reverse deity of the Gupta coins as well as post-Gupta issues.

## V

### Ardhanārī-Nārāyaṇa

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An interesting conception of Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa is noticed in the Gayā Śītalā temple inscription of the local ruler Yakṣapāla who flourished in the latter half of the eleventh century A.D.<sup>1</sup> Verse 12 of this epigraph runs as follows—

*Maunāditya-Sahasraliṅga-Kamalārdhāṅgīna-Nārāyaṇa-  
dvā-Someśvara-Phalgunātha-Vijayādity-āhvayānām kṛti |  
sa prāsādam = acikarad = diviṣadām Kedāreśvarasya ca  
khyātasy = Ottaramānasasya khananām sattraṁ Vaṭe c = ākṣaye ||*

The stanza says that Yakṣapāla excavated the Uttaramānasa tank and established a *sattra* (free feeding centre) near the Akṣayavaṭa and also raised a temple for the following gods— (1) Maunāditya (Sun-god), (2) Sahasraliṅga (Śiva), (3) Kamalārdhāṅgīna-Nārāyaṇa, (4) the two gods called Someśvara (Śiva), (5) Phalgunātha (probably Viṣṇu), (6) Vijayāditya (Sun-god) and Kedāreśvara (Śiva). It appears that the gods had been installed for worship by various persons, and Yakṣapāla built a temple for accommodating all of them.

The third name in the list of deities for whom the temple was built by Yakṣapāla is interesting, because Kamalārdhāṅgīna-Nārāyaṇa means 'Nārāyaṇa, one half of whose body is Kamalā (Lakṣmī)'.<sup>2</sup> The conception of such a combined form of Lakṣmī and Nārāyaṇa was doubtless imitated from the well-known Ardhanārīśvara form of Śiva, in which the right half represents Śiva and the left his consort Pārvatī.

1 *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XXXVI, pp. 92 ff.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 92.

This combined form of Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa has not been clearly traced in the Purāṇas, though Yakṣapāla's inscription proves its prevalence in Eastern India in the eleventh century A.D.

Recently Dr. P. Pal has drawn our attention to the combined form of Lakṣmī and Nārāyaṇa in a bronze sculpture and in a *paṭa*, both from Nepal, as well as in a *dhyāna* quoted in the *Tantrasāra*.<sup>3</sup> But the sculpture and painting have been assigned to the thirteenth century A.D. and the *dhyāna* stanza may be of a still later date. The image referred to in our inscription, which is earlier than the specimens alluded to by Pal, was under worship at Gayā in Bihar, so that the conception does not appear to have originated in Nepal, but was imported from East India to that land. From this point of view, the reference to the combined deity in the Śītalā temple inscription is of considerable importance. The prevalence of the worship of the said deity in Eastern India is also suggested by the *dhyāna* in the *Tantrasāra* which was compiled by the Bengali Tāntric named Kṛṣṇānanda Āgamavāgiśa in the seventeenth century.<sup>4</sup> In this connection, it may be mentioned that the *Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa* seems to refer to a form of Viṣṇu's consort, the left half of which represented Mahālakṣmī and the right half Rādhā and also to one of Viṣṇu having two arms on the right side and four arms on the left.<sup>5</sup> The latter may be a combined image, the left half being the wife of the right half. No specimen of such images, however, seems to be known.

3 *Journ. As. Soc.*, Vol. V, 1963, pp. 73 ff.

4 See Sircar, *The Śākta Piṭhas*, pp. 74 ff.

5 Prakṛti-khaṇḍa, XXXV. 10-12—

*tad-vām-āṁśo Mahālakṣmīr = dakṣiṇ-āṁśas = ca Rādhikā |* . .

*Kṛṣṇas = tad = gauraveṇ = aiva dvidhā-rūpo babhūva ha |*

*dakṣiṇ-āṁśas = ca dvibhujo vām-āṁśas = ca caturbhujah |* . .

The Nepalese bronze image is now preserved in the Museum für Volkerkunde at Basel in Switzerland while the Nepalese *paṭa* is at present in the collection of the Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, Calcutta. In the sculpture, the eight-armed composite deity, with its right half represented as male and left half as female exactly as in the Ardhanārīśvara form of Śiva and Pārvatī, stands in the *samapada* posture on a double-petalled lotus pedestal. While the plain diaphanous garment clings to the right leg, the left leg is draped in cloth with a floral design. The necklace, waist-band and anklets are common to both halves of the body; but the right ear is adorned with a *kuṇḍala* and the four right arms with *aṅgada*, while the left ear has a large ring and the four left arms have ornaments of a type different from that of those on the right arms. As regards the attributes, the right hands bear respectively *cakra* (discus), *gadā* (mace), *śaṅkha* (conch-shell) and lotus-mark, and the left hands, likewise, the *pustaka* (manuscript), *darpaṇa* (mirror) and *kalasa* (water-vessel), the fourth left arm being broken.

In the *paṭa*, the central eight-armed figure of the *maṇḍala* is white and stands in the *samapadasthānaka* pose on a double-petalled lotus in a shrine. The right half of the figure is male, the left half being female and having the feminine breast indicated by a large circle. The right leg is covered to the knee only; but the left leg is covered down to the ankle. Near the right foot of the figure is Garuḍa and near the left foot is what is described as *kūrma* (tortoise). The attributes in the four right hands are respectively—(1) *cakra*, (2) *śaṅkha*, (3) *gadā* and (4) *padma*, while those respectively in the left hands are—(1) *pustaka*, (2) *utpala*, (3) *darpaṇa* and (4) *kalasa*.

An epigraph at the bottom of the *paṭa*, dated in Nepāla-

varṣa 383, Kārttika-su-di 11 (4th November, 1261 A. D.), begins as follows—

*Om namo Bhagavate Vāsudevāya ॥*

*Hima-kund-endu-sadṛśaṁ padma(m\*) kaumodakī punaḥ |*

*śaṅkha-cakra-dhara(dvaya)m daṇḍa(kṣe) vāme ca kalasaṁ tathā ॥*

*darpaṇam = utpalaṁ vidyā Vaiṣṇavaṁ Kamal-ānvitam |*

*pātu daitya-nirākāra trāhi nām (mām) Puruṣottamaḥ(ma) ॥*

The *dhyāna* quoted in the epigraph seems to represent the figure as a Vaiṣṇava (Viṣṇu) image united with Kamalā and describes it as Puruṣottama, also called *Bhagavat Vāsudeva* in the introductory *maṅgala*. The figure is described as white and bearing the attributes—*padma*, *kaumodakī* (Viṣṇu's mace), *śaṅkha* and *cakra* in the right hands and in the left—*kalasa*, *darpaṇa*, *utpala* and *vidyā* (manuscript).

The *Tantrasāra* stanza runs as follows—

*Vidyuc-candra-nibhaṁ vapuḥ Kamalajā-Vaikuṇṭhayaṛ =*

*ekatām*

*prāptaṁ sneha-rasena ratna-vilasat-bhūṣā-bhar-ālaṅkṛtam |*

*vidyā-paṅkaja-darpaṇān maṇimayaṁ kumbhaṁ sarojaṁ gadāṁ*

*śaṅkhaṁ cakram = amūni bibhrad = amitām diśyāc = chriyaṁ*

*vaḥ sadā ॥*

“Let the body of Kamalajā and Vaikuṇṭha, which resembles the lightning and the moon, bear a load of ornaments endowed with jewels, is united in love and holds *vidyā*, *paṅkaja*, *darpaṇa*, *maṇimaya-kumbha* (bejewelled jar), *saroja*, *gadā*, *śaṅkha* and *cakra*, bestow unlimited prosperity on you.”

It appears, however, that the conception of the combined form of the god Viṣṇu and his consort was not confined to the eastern part of India. In a paper entitled ‘Some Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa Images from Western India’, published in the *Journal of the Oriental Institute*, Vol. XIV, 1965, pp. 292-96, Sm. Kalpana S. Desai rightly points to the prevalence of the said



conception on the strength of the following two stanzas in the *Śilparatna* (XXIII. 23, and XXV. 75)—

- (1) *haste bibhrat sarasija-gadā-śaṅkha-cakrāṇi vidyām  
padm-ādarśau kanaka-kalasaṁ megha-vidyud-vilāsam |  
vām-ottuṅga-stanam = aviral-ākālpam = āśleṣa-lobhād =  
ekibhūtaṁ vapur = avatu vaḥ Puṇḍarikākṣa-Lakṣmyoḥ ||*
- (2) *cakraṁ vidyā-dara-ghaṭa-gadā darpaṇān padma-yugmaṁ  
dorbhir = bibhrat surucirataraṁ megha-vidyun-nibh-  
ābham |  
gāḍh-otkanṭha-vivaśam = anīśam Puṇḍarikākṣa-  
Lakṣmyor =  
ekibhūtaṁ vapur = avatu vaḥ pīta-kauśeya-kāntam ||*

Both the stanzas speak of the *ekibhūtaṁ vapuḥ* (the two bodies combined into one) of Puṇḍarikākṣa (Viṣṇu) and Lakṣmī. The attributes in the eight hands of the two deities are given as—(1) lotus, mace, conch-shell and discus for the god ; and (2) manuscript, lotus, looking glass and golden jar for the goddess. The second verse also mentions the same attributes for the combined form of the two deities.

Dr. L. K. Tripathi of Varanasi draws my attention to Dr. S. B. Deo's paper entitled 'Some Ardhanārī Forms of Viṣṇu' just appearing in the *Bhārati*, Vols. X-XI, 1966-63, pp. 125-33. Deo describes twelve late medieval icons representing the Ardhanārī forms of Viṣṇu in the Nārāyaṇa temple in the Svāthe area adjacent to the Sundarī Chowk at Lalit Patan (Nepal), which has been assigned to the beginning of the eighteenth century. The twelve images bear the following labels which do not appear to have any known textual support—(1) Keśava-Lakṣmī, (2) Nārāyaṇa-Sarasvatī, (3) Mādhava-Dāntī, (4) Govinda-Kāntī, (5) Viṣṇu-Dāntī, (6) Madhusūdana-Vidhṛti, (7) Trivikrama-Aticchā, (2) Vāmana-Atipāṭī, (9) Śrīdhara-Dhṛti, (10) Hṛṣīkeśa-Mohinī, (11) Dāmodara-Matimā (?), and (12) Padmanābha-Dharmadā.

The attributes in the hands of the god are the usual *śaṅkha-cakra*, *gadā* and *padma*, although differently arranged in the different cases. As regards the attributes in the hands of the goddess, besides the usual ones referred to above, sometimes *akṣamālā*, *puṣpamālā*, *kamaṇḍalu*, *cāmara*, *vyajana*, etc., have been mentioned. Of the four hands of Sarasvatī, two are broken, the other two holding manuscript and lotus bud.

Deo's contention that the Ardhanārī conception of Viṣṇu, "for which no iconographical precedents can be had in India so far as the Viṣṇu forms are concerned," developed in Nepal during the medieval period does not take into consideration all the evidence at our disposal and is wrong. His attempt to explain away the clear evidence of the *Śilparatna* is no doubt unfortunate.

In connection with the Nepalese *paṭa* discussed above, it may be pointed out that the tortoise as the vehicle or emblem of the goddess Lakṣmī in the *paṭa* does not appear to be known from early sources which generally represent the deity as standing or seated on the lotus.<sup>6</sup> In the modern mythology of Bengal, Lakṣmī is said to have the owl (*pecaka*, *ulūka*) as her *vāhana*.<sup>7</sup> In other respects also the figures do not quite conform to the prescription of old texts; cf. what Gopinatha Rao has said about the goddess: "The figure of Lakṣmī should have only two hands when she is by the side

6 Cf. *aravinda-sthitā* and *padm-āsana-sthā* in the following *dhyānas* quoted in the *Sabdakalpadruma*, s. v. *Lakṣmī*—

*kāntyā kāñcana-sannibhām Himagiri-prakhyaiś = caturbhir = gajair =  
hast-otkṣipta-hiraṇmay-āmṛta-ghṛtair = āsicyamānām Śriyam |  
bibhrāṇām varam = abja-yugmam = abhayam hastaiḥ kirīṭ-ojavalām  
kṣaum-ābaddha-nitamba-bimba-lalitām vande = 'ravinda-sthitām ||  
Pāś-ākṣamālik-āmbhoja-śṛṅgibhir = yāmya-saumyayoḥ |  
padm-āsanasthām dhyāyec = ca Śriyam trailokya-mātaram ||*

7 The figure of Lakṣmī is now painted or made with that of an owl near her feet. [ Cf. also above, p. 123.—Ed. ]

of Viṣṇu. But when she is worshipped in a separate temple, she should have four hands, and be seated upon a lotus of eight petals placed upon a *siṃhāsana*. In one of the two right hands, she should hold a lotus with a long stalk and in the other, a *bilva* fruit. The left hands should carry an *amṛta-ghaṭa* ( a pot containing ambrosia ) and a *śaṅkha* respectively."<sup>8</sup> Of course this is what is known as the Gajalakṣmī, i.e. Lakṣmī being bathed by two elephants from two sides holding water jars in their trunks.

The manuscript, which seems to be unknown from early sources as an attribute of Lakṣmī, has been recognised by Dr. Pal as referring to the *jñāna* aspect of the goddess. He draws our attention to an image of Lakṣmī in the Vaṅgīya Sāhitya Paṇḍit, which is known to hold a manuscript in one of the left hands,<sup>9</sup> to the *Viṣṇu-Purāṇa* representing Lakṣmī as intellect,<sup>10</sup> and to the *Tantrasāra* stating that the Lakṣmī-kavaca ensures a person proficiency in all the branches of knowledge.<sup>11</sup>

As we have seen, the *Śilparatna* (by Śrīkumāra who flourished in the sixteenth century, the work being originally written in the Malayalam script) mentions *vidyā* or manuscript apparently as one of the attributes of the goddess Lakṣmī.

This aspect of Lakṣmī takes her quite close to the goddess Sarasvatī who is usually conceived as *vīṇā-pustaka-dhārīṇī*, i.e.,

8 *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, Vol. I, Part II, p. 374.

9 R. D. Banerji, *Eastern Indian School of Medieval Sculpture*, p. 121, Plate LXII-a.

10 Wilson's trans., 1840, p. 60.

11 Cf. *vidyā-rthinā sadā sevyā viśeṣe Viṣṇu-vallabhā* //

*asyāś = catur-akṣari-Viṣṇu-vanitāyāḥ kavacasya śrī-Bhagavān Śiva iṣir = Anuṣṭup chando Vāgbhavi devatā Vāgbhavaṁ bijam Lajjā śaktiḥ Ramā kīlakaṁ kāmabij-ātmakaṁ kavacaṁ mama sukavitva-supāṇḍitya-sarvasiddhisamīddhaye viniyogaḥ* //

(Pal, *op. cit.*, p. 76).

holding the lute and the manuscript.<sup>12</sup> In East Indian mythology, Lakṣmī and Sarasvatī are the two wives of Viṣṇu<sup>13</sup> and they are now even regarded in the popular mythology of Bengal as sisters, both being the daughters of Śiva and Pārvatī,<sup>14</sup> even though their rivalry and quarrels are also proverbial. That there was a rapprochement between the conceptions of Lakṣmī and Sarasvatī seems to be further indicated by the *Samvatsarapradīpa* quoted in S. M. Bhattacharya's *Purohitadarpaṇa* (Bengali)<sup>15</sup>—

*Pañcamyām pūjayet = Lakṣmīm puṣpa-dhūp-ānna-vāribhiḥ |*  
*masy-ādharām lekhanīn = ca pūjayaṇ = na likhet = tataḥ ||*

12 *Devībhāgavata*, IX. 4. 46.

13 Cf the well-known stanza—

*Ekā bhāryā prakṛti-mukharā cañcalā ca dvitīyā*  
*putro = 'py = eko bhuvana-vijayī Manmatho durnivārah |*  
*Śeṣah śayyā śayanam = udadhir = vāhanam Pannagāriḥ*  
*smāraṁ smāraṁ sva-gṛha-caritaṁ dāru-bhūto Murāriḥ ||*

See also *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XII, p. 13, and note the combined Nārāyaṇa-Sarasvatī image referred to above. The *Devībhāgavata* (IX. 6) and *Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa* (II. 6), which are apparently East Indian products of medieval times, say how Lakṣmī, Sarasvatī and Gaṅgā were originally the wives of Hari (Viṣṇu) and how later Lakṣmī remained Hari's wife, but Gaṅgā and Sarasvatī became the wives respectively of Śiva and Brahman.

Cf. *Lakṣmīḥ Sarasvatī Gaṅgā tisro bhāryā Harer = api |*  
*premaṇā samās = tās = tiṣṭhanti satatam Hari-sannidhau ||*  
*(Devībhāgavata, IX. 6. 17)*

*Gaccha Gaṅge Śiva-sthānam Brahma-sthānam Sarasvatī |*  
*atra tiṣṭhatu mad-gehe suśīlā Kamalālayā ||*

(*ibid.*, IX. 6. 65)

It is also said that, in parts, Sarasvatī still remained with Viṣṇu. For Sarasvatī and Gāyatrī as the wives of the god Brahman, see, e.g., *Padma Purāṇa*, Uttara-khaṇḍa, Ch. 111.

14 This is well known from the Bengali *maṅgala-kāvya*s of the late medieval period. Charu Chandra Bandyopadhyay says that Lakṣmī and Sarasvatī are represented as the daughters of Śiva and Pārvatī 'in the *Nāradiya*, *Dharma* and *Kūrma Purāṇas*' (*Caṇḍīmaṅgalabodhini*, Vol. I, pp. 47, 89).

15 B. S. 1368 ed., p. 245.

*Māghe māsi site pakṣe pañcamī yā Śrīyaḥ priyā |*  
*tasyām pūrv-āhna eva ca kāryaḥ Sārasvat-otsavaḥ ||*

According to this, pen, ink-pot, etc., should be worshipped on the occasion of the worship of both Lakṣmī and Sarasvatī on Māgha-sudi 5 which is called Śrī-pañcamī (i.e. *pañcamī* sacred to the goddess Śrī or Lakṣmī) though Sarasvatī is worshipped on that day in many parts of the country.

If thus Lakṣmī and Sarasvatī were both sometimes conceived as the goddess of learning, we have probably an explanation of the *maṅgala* at the beginning of the Nāgpur *prasasti* (Vikrama 1161) of the Paramāras, which runs as follows—

*Oṃ namo Bhāratyai |*

*Prasāda-audārya-mādhurya-samādhi-samat-ādayaḥ ||*

*yuvayor = ye guṇāḥ santi Vāgdevyau te = 'pi santu naḥ ||*<sup>16</sup>

Here the devotee salutes the goddess Bhārati (Sarasvatī) and, prays that the qualities of the two goddesses of learning may be bestowed on him. The qualities enumerated are *prasāda*, *audārya*, *mādhurya*, *samādhi*, *samatā*, etc., which are, in reality, some of the qualities of good compositions as indicated in Daṇḍin's *Kāvyaadarśa* and other works.<sup>17</sup> The two goddesses of learning may be Sarasvatī and Lakṣmī.\*

In connection with the Ardhanārī form of the god Viṣṇu, reference may be made to a similar form of the Sun-god

16 See *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. II, p. 182.

17 Cf. *Kāvyaadarśa*, I. 41—

*Śleṣaḥ prasādaḥ samatā mādhuryaṁ sukumārātā |*  
*arthavyaktir=udāratvam=ojaḥ-kānti-samādhayaḥ ||*

*Prasāda*=graciousness of disposition, clarity of style; *audārya*, *udāratva*=magnanimity, depth of meaning; *mādhurya*=sweetness of behaviour or style; *samādhi*=intentness, attribution of one's characteristic to another; *samatā*=impartiality, having similar sounds throughout (*bandheṣv=aviṣama*).

\*[See above, p. 108.—Ed.]

mentioned in works like the *Agni Purāṇa*<sup>18</sup> and *Sārādātīlaka*.<sup>19</sup> This aspect of the deity is sometimes regarded as a combination of Śiva (Ardhanārīśvara) and Sūrya (Sun-god) and seems to be given the name Mārtaṇḍa Bhairava.<sup>20</sup> The Ardhanārī form of the god Gaṇapati (Gaṇeśa) is likewise mentioned in the *Halāyudhastotra* inscribed in 1063 A. D. in the Amareśvara temple at Māndhātā in the Nimar District of Madhya Pradesh.

18 CCCI. 9—*sindūr-āruṇam*=*iśāne vām-ārdha-dayitam* Ravim. For *iśāne*, some manuscripts read *iśānam*.

19 Cf. *hem-āmbhoja-pravāla-pratima-nijā-ruciṁ cāru khaṭṭāṅga-padmau cakram śaktim ca pāśam śṛṅgam*=*atiruciram*=*akṣamālām kapālam* / *hast-āmbhojair*=*dadhānam trinayana vilasat-veda-yaktr-ābhirāman* / *Mṛttaṇḍam vallabh-ārdham maṇimaya-mukulam hāra-diptam*  
bhajāmaḥ //

18 See *Agni Purāṇa*, CCCI. 8; cf. *Līṅga Purāṇa*; II. 19. 7; *Matsya Purāṇa*, 55. 5-6.

20 See *Journ. Anc. Ind. Hist.*, Vol. II, p. 112; *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XXV, p. 175, verse 1; cf. Vol. I, p. 104.

## VI

### Laksmi in Pali Literature

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*Lakkhī* is the Pali equivalent of Sanskrit *Lakṣmī*. She is also called *Sirī* in Pali (Sanskrit *Śrī*)<sup>1</sup> Sometimes both the names *Sirī* and *Lakkhī* are found mentioned together.<sup>2</sup> However, by the Buddhists, *Sirī-Lakkhī* is regarded as the goddess of beauty and fortune. The *Abhidhānappadīpikā*<sup>3</sup> says that *Sirī-Lakkhī* is a synonym of the goddess of beauty and property. The commentary on the *Sumaṅgala Jātaka*<sup>4</sup> describes her as the goddess of *parivāra-sampatti* (family property) and *paññā* (wisdom). In the *Sālikedāra Jātaka*,<sup>5</sup> she is regarded as the goddess of wisdom and virtue. The *Dhajaviheṭṭha*<sup>6</sup> and *Sirī-Kālakaṇṇī Jātakas* regard her as the goddess of fortune, luck and wisdom. It is stated in the *Sarabhaṅga Jātaka*<sup>8</sup> that the persons who are wise are favoured

1 E. g., *Jātaka*, PTS, Vol. III, pp. 262, 443.

2 *Loc. cit.*; *Jātaka*, Vol. V, p. 112.

3 Cf. (*Atha*) *Lakkhī Sirī (thiyā)*—verse 81; *sampatti sampadā* *Lakkhī Sirī*—verse 385; (*sobhā sampattisu*) *Sirī Lakkhī (tthi devatā yā ca)*—verse 906.

4 *Jātaka*, Vol. III, p. 443.

5 Cf. *Sirī pi puññam pi paññā pi* (*ibid.*, Vol. IV, pp. 281–82).

6 Cf. *Lakkhī ti Sirī paññā ti pi* (*ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 306.)

7 Cf. *ahaṃ Sirī ca Lakkhī ca bhūripaññā ti maṃ vidū* (*ibid.*, p. 262).

8 *Ibid.*, Vol. V, p. 146, where it is said that the moral observants are wise, i.e. who are self-restrained in body, speech and mind never tell a lie for serving their own end. *Lakkhī* does not forsake a wise man who is grateful, tender, heart-winning, gracious, proves himself a good and steadfast friend, enjoys his own property with others, and speaks smoothly, etc.

by Lakkhī. The commentary on the Jātakas<sup>9</sup> says that Sirī is identified with Lakkhī who is described as equal to *bhūripaṇṇā* (very wise).

The *pañṇā* and *puṇṇa* are co-related. When a man observes the precepts of a meritorious saint, he gets *pañṇā* (wisdom) and thereby he earns *puṇṇa* by performing virtuous deeds.<sup>10</sup> The king, who is pure in deed, word and thought, filled with kindness, calm and awe, and free from anger and fear, gets wisdom which is described as *Sirī-Lakkhī* in the *Sumaṅgala Jātaka*.<sup>11</sup> When a man is favoured by Lakkhī, he will get great praise from her in this world and, after death, will reach heaven.<sup>12</sup> Thus it is found that Lakkhī was the goddess of wisdom like Sarasvatī, the goddess of learning, wisdom, etc., of the Brāhmaṇical literature.

The *Dhammapadaṭṭhakathā*<sup>13</sup> mentions *rajja-sirī-dāyikā-devatā* which may be regarded as a name of Lakkhī, the goddess of kingdom and property.

The *Cūlavamsa*<sup>14</sup> mentions Vīralakkhī, the goddess who gives success to the hero in the battle.

In the *Sirī-Kālakaṇṇī Jātaka*,<sup>15</sup> Sirī is described as the daughter of Dharaṭṭha, one of the four kings of the *Cātummahārājika-devaloka*. She comes down to earth through the air with raiment and ointment of golden hue and ornament of golden brightness diffusing yellow light. She presides over the course of conduct<sup>16</sup> and, being asked by the merchant

9 *Loc. cit.* ; *Jātaka*, Vol. III, p. 306.

10 *Jātaka*, Vol. III, p. 306.

11 *Ibid.*, pp. 442-43.

12 *Ibid.*, p. 306.

13 Vol. I, PTS, p. 17 ; *ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 17.

14 PTS, Chapter 72, verses 101, 112 ; *ibid.*, Chapter 76, verse 233.

15 Vol. III, pp. 257, 262 ; see *Jātaka*, Vol. V, p. 392, where *Sirī*, 'glory', is regarded as the daughter of Sakka, king of the *Tāvatisa-devaloka*.

16 *Jātaka*, Vol. III, p. 258.



Suciparivāra ( 'pure household' ), describes her conduct. She loves and lives with him who has done his duty even in cold, heat, wind, thirst and hunger, and in the fear of snake and poisonous fly.<sup>17</sup> She becomes his friend always wherever he is—living or dead, who is kind enough, without harsh word or curse to his friend or enemy, better, like or worse, helper or foe.<sup>18</sup> She favours him who is gentle (without anger), friendly, righteous, liberal, guileless, honest, upright, winning, bland and meek in high place.<sup>19</sup> As this conduct gives lordship over mankind she is called *Issariyadāyikā*.<sup>20</sup>

In the *Tesakuṇa Jātaka*,<sup>21</sup> Sirī-Lakkhī says that she loves the man who is energetic, bold and free from jealousy. He can get the treasure of bliss if he is earnest.<sup>22</sup> When these merits lie in a king, he is regarded as an ideal ruler by the gods, the Gandhabbas, angels, men and spirits.<sup>23</sup>

In the *Sirī Jātaka*,<sup>24</sup> the Buddha says,

*Yaṃ ussukā saṃgharanti alakkhikā buhuṃ dhanam |*  
*sippavanto asippā ca Lakkhivā tāni bhuñjati ||*

What great wealth the unlucky person ( not favoured by Lakkhī ) gathers by striving, the lucky person (favoured by Lakkhī ) enjoys that whether he is skilled or unskilled.<sup>25</sup> The lucky persons get their wealth from a treasury<sup>26</sup> which contains

17 *Ibid.*, p. 262.

18 *Ibid.*, p. 262-63.

19 *Ibid.*, p. 262 ; cf. *ibid.*, p. 443, where it is said that the king possesses Lakkhī permanently if he is free from anger.

20 *Ibid.*, p. 258.

21 Cf. *Uttānaviriye pose ram' āham anusuyyake (ibid., Vol. V, p. 112).*

22 *Ibid.*, Vol. V, p. 113 ; cf. *ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 262.

23 *Ibid.*, Vol. V, p. 113.

24 *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 413

25 See below, note 31.

26 Cf. *Esa devamanussānaṃ sabbakāmadado nidhi |*  
*yaṃ yad evābhipatthenti sabbam etena labbhati ||*  
*Suvaṇṇatā sussaratā sutaṇṇānasurūpatā |*  
*adhipaccaparivāro sabbam etena labbhati ||*

of all such good things as fine looks, voice, figure, form, sovereignty with all its pomp, lordship and kingdom, imperial bliss, the crown of heaven, all human happiness, the joys of heaven, Nibbāna, true ties of friendship, wisdom's liberty, firm self-control, analytical knowledge or understanding, training by which perfection is attained by the Sāvaka or Hinayāna monks, salvation and *Paccekabodhi-buddhabhūmi*, i.e. the position whence one gets supreme knowledge.

The Buddha explains that the favour of luck or Lakkhī is nothing but the result of the merit earned by a person in previous births through virtuous deeds and this enables a person to obtain treasures.<sup>27</sup> Thus 'earned merit' is regarded as the goddess Lakkhī. In this sense, she may also be considered as the Supreme deity because Nibbāna, the final goal of the Buddhist doctrine, can be available only by earned merit.

Goddess Lakkhī lives in four objects—a fowl, a gem, a club, and a wife.<sup>28</sup> Golden colour is a lucky mark and a divine hue.<sup>29</sup> The Buddha says that the luck belonging to one person does not go to another. But, in his previous birth, he saw that the luck belonging to those of small wit went to the wise.<sup>30</sup>

*Padesarajjam issariyam cakkavattisukham pi yam /  
devarajjam pi dibbesu sabbam etena labbhati ||  
Mānusikā ca sampatti devaloke ca yā rati |  
yā ca nibbānasampatti sabbam etena labbhati ||  
Mittāsampadam āgamma yoniso ve payūñjato |  
Vijjāvimutti vasībhāvo sabbam etena labbhati ||  
Paṭisambhidā vimokkho ca yā ca sāvakaṇārami |  
paccekabodhibuddhabhūmi sabbam etena labbhati ||  
Evam mahiddhiyā esā yadidaṃ puññasampadā |  
tasmā dhīrā paṇṇasanti paṇḍitā katapuññatan=ti ||*

27 *Jātaka*, Vol. II, p. 414.

28 Cf. *Kukkūṭamaṇayo daṇḍo thīyo ca puññalakkaṇā /  
upparijanti apāpassa katapuññassa jantuno ti ||*  
(*ibid.*, p. 415).

29 *Ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 261.

30 *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 412.

In connection with this, he tells an old-world tale in the *Sirī-Jātaka*.<sup>31</sup> A stick-gatherer heard a quarrel among the fowls. In the course of the quarrel, one fowl boasted, "Anybody who kills me, and eats my flesh roasted on coals, gets a thousand coins in the morning." The other fowl said, "Anybody who eats my fleshy parts will become king; if he eats my outside, he will become the commander-in-chief or the chief queen, according as he is a man or a woman; in case he eats my bones, he will get the post of royal treasurer, if he be a householder, or will become the king's favourite if he is a holy man." Having heard this, the man killed the latter fowl and his wife cooked it. But, unfortunately, they could not eat it. When they went to bathe by putting the meat on the bank of the Ganges, the water washed it away. It floated in the river and came in sight of an elephant trainer. He took it and ate the fleshy parts of the fowl; his wife ate the exterior part of it. As a result, the elephant trainer became king within three days and his wife became queen.

Goddess Lakṣhī appears also in the earliest Buddhist sculptures seated on a lotus between two elephants that pour water over her.<sup>32</sup>

The *Tesakuṇa Jātaka*<sup>33</sup> says that the king who cannot forsake low association, falsehood, anger, scorn, jealousy and passion and becomes careless, unrighteous in ruling and does not repent the deed and learn not to do it again, is overpowered by Alakkhī (Goddess of Misfortune).

The blue colour is regarded as the unlucky mark and the unlucky person is known from his blue raiments.<sup>34</sup> Good luck and ill luck can never mate each other.<sup>35</sup> If a fool wins

31 *Ibid.*, pp. 411 ff.

32 Cf. Rhys Davids, *Buddhist India*, p. 217.

33 *Jātaka*, Vol. V, pp. 112-13.

34 *Ibid.*, Vol. III, pp. 259-60.

35 *Ibid.*, Vol. VI, p. 349.

some favour from Sirī and becomes proud and vain, he will be deprived of her favour.<sup>36</sup>

Goddess Alakkhī is identified with Kālakaṇṇī (Misfortune),<sup>37</sup> the daughter of Virūpakkha, one of the four kings of the *Cātummahārājika-devaloka*.<sup>38</sup> She comes down to earth through the air with blue raiment, ointment, and jewels, diffusing a blue light.<sup>39</sup> She loves him who is hypocritical, wanton, morose, envious, greedy and treacherous. She loves also hatred, slander, strife, libel and cruelty. She enjoys pleasure from a man who is foolish and is despised by his friends.<sup>40</sup>

Although, as shown above, the goddess Lakkhī is treated as Sarasvatī in Pali literature, the *Cūlavamsa*<sup>41</sup> mentions a Buddhist king who established a *Sarasvatīmaṇḍapa* (the temple of the goddess Sarasvatī) in South India.\* This shows that the goddess Sarasvatī was a separate deity.

In the *Mahāummagga Jātaka*,<sup>42</sup> the Buddha refutes the Brāhmanical idea that Lakkhī and Sarasvatī cannot live together, i.e. they cannot favour one man at a time. He explains that a man cannot be favoured by Lakkhī (the goddess of wealth) unless and until he is favoured by Sarasvatī (the goddess of wisdom). He says that one cannot preserve wealth if he is not wise.

36 *Ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 263.

37 Cf. *aham Kālī alakkhikā Kālakaṇṇīti mām vidū* (*Jātaka*, Vol. III, p. 259).

38 *Ibid.*, pp. 257, 259.

39 *Ibid.*, p. 258.

40 *Ibid.*, pp. 259-60.

41 Chapter 73, verse 86.

\* [King Parakkamabāhu I of Ceylon built it near his palace at Pulatthipura.—Ed.]

42 *Jātaka*, Vol. VI, pp. 356-62.

## VII

### Some Aspects of Sarasvatī

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At present Sarasvatī is worshipped chiefly as a goddess of learning and instruction. But in ancient times she was looked upon not only as a goddess of learning, but also as a deity who could cure incurable diseases and was immensely bountiful. Some other traits of her character were also known to the Vedic and Purāṇic writers. In this note we shall examine the different aspects of the goddess.

#### As a Goddess of Wisdom and Speech.

Sarasvatī is known from a quite early period predominantly as a deity of speech and wisdom. Although Macdonell<sup>1</sup> thinks that in the *R̥gveda* she is nothing more than a river goddess, there are also passages in that work which clearly connect her with wisdom and instruction. In one passage<sup>2</sup> of that *Samhitā* we find the following words—*Codayitrī sunṛtānām cetamṛtī sumatīnām yajñam dadhe Sarasvatī*. In the *Vājasaneyisaṃhitā*,<sup>3</sup> however, her connection with speech (*vāc*) is alluded to for the first time. In the literature of the Brāhmaṇa period and chiefly in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*,<sup>4</sup> Sarasvatī is repeatedly described as the personification of speech. In the *Āśvalāyanagṛhyasūtra*,<sup>5</sup> she is invoked to give intelligence to the new-born child. In the *Gṛhyasūtra* of Pāraskara also, Sarasvatī is asked to bestow

1 *Vedic Mythology*, p. 87.

2 1.3.11.

3 19.12.

4 2.5.4.6 ; 3.1.4.9 ; 3.9.17 ; 3.9.19 ; 4.2.5.4 ; 4.6.3.4 ; 5.3.4.3 ; etc.

5 1.15.2.

insight and intelligence upon her worshippers. The relevant verse of that work is worth quoting since it is one of the finest tributes ever paid to Sarasvatī : “Sarasvatī, promote this ( our understanding ), O gracious one, the bountiful one, thou whom we sing first of all, that is in whom what is, has been born, in whom this world dwells.”<sup>6</sup> In one passage of the *Hiraṇyakeśigṛhyasūtra*,<sup>7</sup> Sarasvatī’s connexion with learning has been referred to. In the *Rāmāyaṇa*,<sup>8</sup> Sarasvatī appears only as a goddess of speech. In the *Mahābhārata* and the later Purāṇas, her connection with learning is repeatedly emphasised.

It should, however, be remembered that in ancient India several other deities were also connected with learning. Prominent among them were Śiva, Brahman, Skanda and Sūrya. Therefore, so far as wisdom and learning are concerned, Sarasvatī had no absolute monopoly. But in the later mythology, she becomes the only accepted goddess of learning. In both the epics, she is called the tongue of Viṣṇu<sup>9</sup> and, in the *Mahābhārata*,<sup>10</sup> she gets the highly flattering title, ‘the Mother of the Vedas’.

### As a Goddess of Art and Music.

As a presiding deity of learning, it is natural that Śarasvatī should also be described as a goddess of such important branches of learning as Art and Music. In the *Kāmasūtra*<sup>11</sup> of Vātsyāyana, we are told that the wealthy citizens (*Nāgarakas*) used to flock every fortnight to the temple of the goddess Sarasvatī to witness dramatic performances, etc. From the

6 2.4.8.

7 1.2.6.4.

8 VII. 10.41, 43, 47.

9 *Mbh.*, 6.16 ; *Rām.*, VI. 120.9 and 25.

10 XII. 340. 19.

11 4.27-33.

Pāli *Cūlavamsa*,<sup>12</sup> we learn that king Parakkamabāhu built a palace called *Sarassatīmaṇḍapa*. We further learn that it was devoted to the arts of the Muses and was adorned with frescoes. As a deity connected with music, she is often delineated both in art and literature as holding a lyre (*vīṇā*). We should also remember in this connection that Bhojadeva's great work on rhetoric was named *Sarasvatīkaṇṭhābharana* (i.e. the necklace of Sarasvatī).

As a goddess of Wisdom and Art, Sarasvatī reminds us of Roman Minerva and Greek Athēnē. But the conception of the Indian goddess of wisdom is infinitely more beautiful than either of the two western deities. Athēnē of Homer is nothing but a scheming, cantankerous and selfish goddess.

### As a Physician.

In the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, Sarasvatī often appears as a healer-goddess. We often come across such words as "they said to Sarasvatī, verily, thou art healing medicine: heal thou this one."<sup>13</sup> The conception of Sarasvatī as a healer and physician may be traced to a Rgvedic passage<sup>14</sup> where she, along with the Aśvins, is said to have refreshed Indra. The reference to the same myth is also found in the *Vājasaneyi-saṃhitā*.<sup>15</sup> It is also of some interest to note that the same work represents Sarasvatī as the wife of the Aśvins<sup>16</sup> who are universally represented as divine physicians.<sup>17</sup>

In later literature also, this aspect of Sarasvatī is not

12 LXXIII, 83 f.; see also Malalasekera, *Dictionary of Pāli Proper Names*, Vol. II, p. 1074.

13 12.7.1.12; 12.8.3.2; 12.8.3.14; see also *S.B.I.*, Vol. XLII, p. 389.

14 X. 131.

15 19.12.

16 19.94.

17 See Macdonell, *op. cit.*, pp. 51 f.

entirely forgotten. In the *Kathāsaritsāgara*<sup>18</sup> of Somadeva, we are told how the 'potent drugs' of Sarasvatī were used by the ladies of Pāṭaliputra to cure some dangerously sick people.

### As a Goddess of Prosperity.

It is profoundly interesting to note that Sarasvatī who is goddess, *par excellence*, of learning should be represented in our early literature as a deity of prosperity. In support of this, we may quote here a passage from the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*: "May Sarasvatī, the prosperity, the lord of prosperity, bestow prosperity upon me at this sacrifice, Svāhā ! Sarasvatī taking the oblation departed and restored prosperity to her."<sup>19</sup> In this connection, we should not forget to note that Sarasvatī, who is primarily a river-goddess in the *Rgveda*, has been delineated as yielding riches of every kind<sup>20</sup> and invoked to give health, plenty and nourishment.<sup>21</sup> The epithet *Subhagā* is applied to her more than once in the *Rgveda*.<sup>22</sup> It should also be noted that Sarasvatī is sometimes identified with the cow,<sup>23</sup> which may be explained by the fact that she was regarded as bountiful as the cow. In later mythology, Sarasvatī is seldom described as a goddess of prosperity probably due to the emergence of an independent deity of prosperity in the figure of Lakṣmī. In later literature, they are often represented as rivals being jealous of each other.<sup>24</sup>

18 10.10.30-39 ; see also Tawney and Penzer, *The Ocean of Story*, Vol. V, pp. 180-81.

19 11.4.3.16 ; see also 11.4.3.7.

20 I 1.64 ; see also Macdonell, *op. cit.*, p. 87.

21 7.5 ; 8.21.

22 1.89 ; 7.95 ; 8. 21.

23 VS, 8.43.

24 See Kālidāsa's *Vikramorvaśīya*, V. 24 ; also Tawney and Penzer, *op. cit.*, Vol. VI, p. 106.



## Miscellaneous Aspects.

It is of great interest to note that, in a single passage of the *Mahābhārata*, Sarasvatī is associated with the science of judicature (*daṇḍanīti*). The relevant verse is quoted below :

*Tasmāc = ca dharmacaraṇām nītiṁ devīm Sarasvatīm /*

*asṛjad = daṇḍanītiḥ sā triṣu lokeṣu viśrutā ||*<sup>25</sup>

In the *Mahābhārata*,<sup>26</sup> she is represented as the wife of Manu. We have already referred to her association with the Aśvins in the Vedic literature. She is also sometimes painted as the wife of both Viṣṇu and Brahman in the Purāṇas.

As a white-complexioned goddess Sarasvatī symbolises everything that is pure and august in life. In the *Manusmṛti*,<sup>27</sup> offerings to Sarasvatī have been prescribed for the expiation of falsehood.

25 *Mbh.*, Poona ed., XII. 122.25.

26 *Ibid.*, 343.75 ; see also Hopkins, *Epic Mythology*, p. 201.

27 See VIII. 105 ; also *S.B.E.*, Vol. XXV, p. 272.

## VIII

### Antiquity of the Concept of Lakṣmī

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The folk-elements played a significant role in shaping the idea personified in the goddess Lakṣmī. The idea underlying the concept of Lakṣmī is that of good fortune. The meaning of fortune changes from individual to individual. To Agni it was food, to Soma kingdom, to Varuṇa universal sovereignty, to Mitra noble rank, to Indra power, to Bṛhaspati holy lustre, to Savitṛ dominion, to Pūṣan wealth, to Sarasvatī prosperity and to Tvaṣṭṛ beauty, as it is known from the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* (XI. 4.1 ff). Coveted things, in various forms, are granted, according to the needs of men, by the all-powerful creator Prajāpati through Śrī-Lakṣmī. If we search for the basic concept of Lakṣmī, we must investigate into the wants of the common people who live upon the earth. The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*<sup>1</sup> informs us that, when Pṛthu became invested with universal dominion, his subjects, who had suffered from famine, besought him for edible plants which the earth withheld. In anger, he seized his bow to compel her to yield the usual supply. She assumed the form of a cow and fled before him. Unable to escape, she implored him to spare her and promised to restore all the needed fruits if a calf were given to her. The king, therefore, having made Svāyambhuva Manu the calf, milked the earth and received the milk into his own hand for the benefit of mankind. Thence proceeded all kinds of corn and vegetables upon which people subsist perpetually. The goddess Pṛthivī is represented as receiving her name from

1. Dowson, *Classical Dictionary of Hindu Mythology*, p. 243.

Pṛthu. The underlying tone of the story can also be traced in the *Atharvaveda*. Śrī-Lakṣmī, described in a relatively late hymn, the so-called *Khila-sūkta* of the *Rgveda*, as the mother of created beings (*prajānām bhavasi mātā*), was an embellished form of the primitive Mother-goddess representing the Earth (Bhūdevī) as well as her fertility. For, the people depending primarily on the earth for their living discovered good fortune and even prosperity in the life-producing Mother-goddess. The goddess of Fortune, Demeter or Tyche in Greece, Fortune or Abundantia in Rome, Ardochsho in Persia or Lakṣmī in India was a local development of the Mother-goddess of the Chalcolithic period,<sup>2</sup> who was the dominant figure in the ancient Near East as well as the Indus Valley.

In mythology and art, Lakṣmī is associated with the lotus, for which she is described as lotus-born, standing on lotus, lotus-coloured, lotus-eyed, abounding in lotuses,<sup>3</sup> etc. The lotus plant itself symbolises the vegetation of India proper on the one hand and the first creative principle on the other. Out of the cosmic waters grow this lotus plant to give birth to Brahman, the creator of this Universe. Lakṣmī is also believed to have been born of the water. She is popularly known as Jaladhi-jā, for, according to the *Rāmāyaṇa*, she sprang from the ocean, in full beauty with a lotus in her hand, due to its churning by the gods and demons. From the mythological point of view, water is the first substance of creation. "The waters are female, they are the maternal, procreative aspect of the Absolute and the lotus is their generative organ," according to the Hindu conception. These considerations almost compel us to believe that the goddess Lakṣmī is the goddess Earth herself who was the begetter of all beings. She represents

2 Zimmer, *Myths and Symbols in Indian Art and Civilisation*, pp. 92 ff.

3 *Rgveda*, 4.4.34 (Śrī-sūkta at the end of the 5th Maṇḍala).

Fertility or Procreative Energy held in high esteem by the pre-historic peoples.

In the patriarchal society of the Vedic Aryans, the Mother-goddess did not obtain the rank which she had enjoyed in the Valley of the Indus during the Chalcolithic period. John Marshall<sup>4</sup> refers to the ancient world from the Indus to the Nile, in which female figurines representing "effigies of the great Mother-goddess or of one or other of her local manifestations" have been found. A terracotta seal<sup>5</sup> found at Harappa is interesting in this connection. On the obverse of the seal is found a crude female figure shown upside down with legs wide apart and with a plant issuing from her womb. The female figure has been identified by Marshall with the Earth-goddess.

The Mother-goddess cult, the existence of which is found at Mohenjodaro and Harappa, was also predominant in the Tigris-Euphrates Valley. When the birth-cult was brought into relation with the seasonal cycle and its vegetation ritual in agricultural communities such as those of Mesopotamia, the Earth-goddess was conceived as the generative power in nature as a whole. In Sumerian mythology, Nin-hur saga, 'the mother of land', in association with En-ki, the water-god of wisdom, was believed to have conceived the fertile soil and given birth to vegetation.<sup>6</sup> Innana-Ishtar was the ultimate and constant source of regeneration, delivering the earth from the blight of sterility with the co-operation of Dumuzi-Tanmuz who incarnated the creative powers of spring. In Egyptian mythology, Isis, mother of heaven, is associated with Hathor,

4 *Mohenjodaro and Indus Civilisation*, Vol. I, pp. 48ff.

5 J. N. Banerjea, *Development of Hindu Iconography*, p. 167.

6 Kramer, *Sumerian Mythology*, pp. 56ff.

the heavenly cow, who embodied all that was best in womanhood and was connected with the annual flow of the Inundation and all the blessings this brought to the Nile Valley. Hathor was, in fact, the Great Mother of the world, the personification of creative power in nature.<sup>7</sup> While among the Sumerians and the Babylonians, the Mother-goddess had been known as Innana-Ishtar, in the Nile Valley, she was known as Isis-Hathor ; in Syria and Palestine, she appeared as the Earth-goddess associated with a corn cultus bearing names as Asherah, Astarte and Anat.<sup>8</sup> It has been suggested by E. C. James that Isis-Hathor of Egypt eventually became the Magna Mater of Western Asia, Greece and Rome. "It was her worship that spread so rapidly in the Hellenistic period until it became a predominant element in the welter of religions in the Roman empire in the 1st century B. C. and 1st century A. D." Its local development is probably to be found in the development of the cult of Demeter in Greece and that of Fortune in Rome.

The Chalcolithic culture was everywhere characterised by matriarchy, a cult of the productive powers of nature and the Mother-goddess.<sup>9</sup> These characteristics are vouchsafed for, as it is shown by the archæological evidences, in the civilisation of Mohenjodaro and Harappa. The *Rgveda*, the earliest literary monument of the Aryan and Brāhmanical tradition, primarily pays respect to the male deities who enjoy the superior position in comparison with a handful of female deities. The goddess Śrī-Lakṣmī does not appear among the divinities of the Vedic pantheon. The first reference to the goddess is

7 Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, Vol. I, pp. 431ff.

8 E. O. James, *The Ancient Gods*, p. 86.

9 Coomaraswamy, *History of Indian and Indonesian Art*, p. 3.

found in a late hymn, one of the so-called *Khilas* (supplement), appended to the *Rgveda*. It is significant that all the traits that characterise Lakṣmī in the epics and the Purāṇas as well as in art are found in this hymn. Most probably, the Aryans borrowed the concept of the Mother-goddess or Earth-goddess, the presiding deity of fortune based on agriculture, from the Pre-Aryan Indians. This Harappa element in Aryan culture is probably due to the survival of the Harappa people as slaves and serfs of the Aryan invaders.<sup>10</sup> The Rgvedic hymns refer to the destruction of the 'walled cities' which might indicate the cities of the Indus Valley. However, the Aryans were ready to imbibe the culture of the conquered people, though at a later stage.

10 *History of Mankind*, Vol. I, ed. J. Houokes and L. Woolley, p. 406.

## IX

### Śrī-Lakṣmi in Early Indian Literature and Art

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#### SUMMARY\*

The words *Lakṣmī* and *Śrī* first appear in the *Ṛgveda*, of which the latter is much more frequent in comparison. *Lakṣmī* occurs only once in 10. 71. 2 wherein it is called *bhadrā*. References to *śrī* show that the word more often stands for beauty, lustre and wealth. The two words also occur in the different *Samhitās* of the three other Vedas. At one place in the *Śaunaka Samhitā* of the *Atharvaveda*, we find the Rohi praying for the augmentation or bestowing of *Śrī* along with *kṣatra*. At another place, *śrī* is enumerated with *brahma*, *kṣatra*, *rāṣṭra*, *viśa*, *yaśas*, *varcasa*, *draviṇa*, *āyus*, *vṛtti*, etc., and it is said that these leave the Kṣatriya who snatches away the cow of a Brāhmaṇa. According to the *Atharvaveda*, there are one hundred *Lakṣmīs*, of which the *Pāpinī*, *Patayalu*, *Ajuṣṭā* and *Pāpiṣṭhā* are warded off while the auspicious ones (*Śivā*) are prayed for. The *Paippalāda Samhitā* also mentions these words in the same sense. The sage is seen anxious for the destruction of the *śrī* of his unfavourites or rivals (*a-priya*) and to excel others in it (*śrī*). He is also keen to protect his own *śreṣṭhā Śrī*. The fact that the word *śrī* is used with *ojas*, *tejas*, *sāhasa*, *bala*, *vāk*, *dharma* and *indriya* in one verse and with *kṣatra* and *mahī* in another shows that the word was being used in an abstract sense and it probably indicated a sort of quality in one's personality resulting from his success

\* [ We received this summary of Dr. Tripathi's paper at the time of the seminar, but were expecting his full paper even when these pages were going through the press. Some of the statements here could have been verified if proper references to the texts were given.—Ed.]

and happiness in different walks of life because of his other possessions. Its mention with *draviṇa* in another verse tends to show that it was different from material wealth. This *Samhitā* also knows of one hundred Lakṣmīs which were probably brought among the men by Indra after killing the Asuras. Here too, some of these Lakṣmīs are regarded as Pāpiṣṭhā, Bhrūṇagnī, Patighnī, Devaragnī, Rudriyā, Ghorā, Putraghnī, Bhīmā, and Patayalu. They are apparently inauspicious and therefore warded off. The others are Bhadrā, Puṇyā and Kalyāṇī, and naturally they are welcomed. In the *Kāṇva Samhitā* also the Rṣis pray for Śrī or the *uttamā Śrī*. In one verse, Śrī has been compared with the head in human body and Yaśas with the mouth, etc. The fact that Śrī and Lakṣmī occur together in one verse of the *Samhitā* ( *śrīś = ca te Lakṣmīs = ca pātuya* ) shows that the two words, perhaps, had two different connotations, whatever the amount and degree of this difference. The references to these words in the *Brāhmaṇas* are more numerous, the most significant being that of the *ŚB* (11. 4. 3. 1) wherein, for the first time, Śrī is personified in the form of a beautiful heavenly woman driven from the person of Prajāpati by his asceticism. Śrī also finds mention in some of the *Śrauta* and *Gṛhya Sūtras*. She is found listed among the important non-Vedic deities to whom *bali* was offered. In the *Taittiriya Upaniṣad*, Śrī is regarded as bestower of garments, cows, food and drink. In the *Śrī-sūkta*, Śrī is visualised as standing on the lotus (*padma-sthitā*). In the *Jātakas*, Sirī or Sirimā occurs as the daughter of Dhataratṭha, one of the four gaurdian angels, and as the popular goddess of luck and plenty. In the *Rāmāyaṇa*, Śrī carrying lotus in the hand is found represented on Kubera's car. Śrī and Lakṣmī find frequent mention in the *Mahā-bhārata*. Different damsels or heroines are compared with or mistaken for Śrī because of their beauty. She is said



to have been born from the ocean after its churning and gone to Viṣṇu. She is also known to have partially incarnated herself in the form of Draupadī and Rukmiṇī. Further, it is mentioned in the *Mahābhārata* that she gave birth to Kāma and Darpa, the latter from Adharma. She is also regarded as producing *Artha* from Dharma, and is associated with Kubera, Indra and Brahman in whose palaces she is said to be present. In the *Mahābhāṣya* of Patañjali, Lakṣmī appears as an important goddess, very similar to Śrī of the Purāṇas. There is similarity between the Purāṇic and epic conceptions of Lakṣmī. Like the *Mahābhārata*, the Purāṇas also regard her as a daughter of Dakṣa, the wife of Dharma, the mother of Kāma, and the sister of Dhātṛ and Vidhātṛ. However, the Purāṇas give a few more details about her.

The representation of Śrī or Lakṣmī in the Indian sculptural and numismatic art begins from about the 2nd century B.C. and continued for more than a millennium upto the 12th century A.D. and lingers even upto the present day. There has been a good deal of controversy regarding the identification of the goddess represented with two elephants pouring water over her. Coomaraswamy regarded her as Brāhmanical Lakṣmī and tried to trace her history from the *Rgveda*. He feels that the goddess has her associations with the waters and the lotus since very early times, and the lotus is a symbol of waters. In his opinion, the elephants and water represent or symbolise the clouds and the rains. He also feels that Aditi, wife of Viṣṇu and a personification of Nature as the Great Mother, presents close analogies with Śrī-Lakṣmī as a goddess of fertility and wealth, and something of Aditi is certainly present in the later Śrī. He refers to the early Jain literature mentioning the auspicious dreams of Triśalā including the *abhiṣeka* of Śrī. Foucher, on the other hand, sees the nativity of the Buddha in the so-called Gajalakṣmī repre-

sentation. He is prompted and guided by statistical data and the absence of representation of the birth of the Buddha among the Buddhist scenes. In his opinion, the lotus is the symbol of miraculous birth and represented the miracle of the Buddha's birth in the beginning, and this is the reason of its frequency and popularity. In his view, the *pūrṇa-ghaṭa* with lotus issuing from it also represents the Buddha's nativity, and this is why the *pūrṇa-ghaṭa* motif is found in widely separated Buddhist sites like Sanchi, Bharhut, Mathurā, Amarāvatī and Gandhāra. The female figure, according to Foucher, came later and the two elephants still later, though, in art, these four motifs occur side by side. He feels that the elephant came to be associated with the motif being mistaken for the two Nāgas (as *nāga* also stands for 'elephant') mentioned in the Buddhist literature to have bathed the new born Buddha with two streams of warm and cold water. He further says that the goddess cannot be Lakṣmī as she is treated with scant respect in the Buddhist literature and no satisfactory Brāhmaṇical explanation can be found for the representation of the two elephants. References in early Indian literature, however, go to show that the hypothesis of Coomaraswamy is not unfounded. They do show the presence of the Brāhmaṇical goddess gradually assuming a definite form. On the other hand, the conclusions of Foucher regarding the so-called Gajalakṣmī are borne out by circumstantial sculptural and numismatic evidence. In their conception, the Buddhists might have borrowed a great deal from the earlier Indian traditions; but the goddess on the Buddhist monuments appears to represent only Māyā and the nativity of the Buddha. The facts that she and Sirimā Devatā occur together at Bharhut, that she is represented with folded hands in certain cases at Bharhut and Sanchi, that the elephants in similar posture are represented bathing the Bodhi tree and the *stūpa* at Kanheri

and that she is mostly found on the Buddhist monuments, one of which is of Yavana authorship go in favour of Foucher's identification. The postures of some of the standing figures at Sanchi may also indicate the same. Furthermore, there is a representation of the scene in which behind the two elephants are represented a lotus and an umbrella, the latter definitely indicative and symbolical of the Buddha's presence. The attendants of the goddess regarded my Coomaraswamy and S. S. Bhattacharya as bearing food and drink are really the bearers of *kasuka* and *prasādhana-mañjuṣā*, both indicative of royalty and befitting the representation of Māyā. In another scene, a lady with folded hands is similarly attended by two female attendants carrying pitcher and umbrella respectively.

The identification of the goddess on the reverse of certain types of the Gupta coins has also aroused some controversy because of her association with the lion and the lotus at the same time. R. K. Dikshit on the basis of three images from Khajuraho and the authority of Hemādri has tried to prove that the goddess is Lakṣmī. S. N. Mishra has further tried to show that literary evidence associates the lion, lotus and *pāśa*, the first as her mount and the second and third as her attributes, with the goddess Lakṣmī or Mahālakṣmī. The 11th-12th century sculptural and literary evidence may not bear sufficient weight in the eyes of scholars for identifying the device on the fourth-fifth century coinage. It may be pointed out, however, that the Khajuraho sculptures mark the continuity of an earlier tradition. The existence of such a tradition in the earlier age is indicated by certain sculptures of the Gupta-Pratihāra periods in which the goddess has lion as her mount and the lotus as her attributes and is also being anointed by two elephants. The identification of the goddess as Lakṣmī therefore appears to be beyond doubt and is in keeping with the earlier tradition which may perhaps be traced back to the controversial coin of Azes.

## SUPPLEMENT TO PART I

### X

#### Foreign Official Designations in Early Indian Records\*

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Of the numerous official designations mentioned in early Indian records,<sup>1</sup> a few have been noticed to represent the Indianised forms of some foreign expressions denoting officers, while there are others which contain some foreign words. Sometimes, designations of the first type are also found joined with some Indian words. In the following lines, an attempt has been made to enumerate both these types of official designations.

1. *Kṣatrapa* and *Mahākṣatrapa*. *Kṣatrapa* was the title of the viceroys who governed the provinces under the Scytho-Kuṣāṇa rulers. The word *Kṣatrapa* ( satrap ) is a Sanskritised form of the Old Persian *Khshathrapāvan*. Traced in the coin legends and inscriptions,<sup>2</sup> it has been interpreted to mean 'the protector of the land,' 'the protector of the kingdom,' 'the protector of the realm,' 'a provincial governor', etc., by different scholars.<sup>3</sup> Elsewhere we have shown that the occurrence of the word in Prakrit *Khattapaka* in the *Angavijjā*

\*[ The revised copy of the paper reached us in February, 1970.—Ed.]

1 For a discussion on some Indian official designations mentioned in epigraphic records, see D. C. Sircar's *Indian Epigraphy*, Delhi, 1965, pp. 351-76.

2 E. J. Rapson, *Catalogue of Coins of the Andhra Dynasty*, etc., 1908, p.c.; H. C. Raychaudhuri, *Political History of Ancient India*, 6th ed., 1953, p. 443.

3 See the author's paper in *JAIH*, Vol. I, p. 31.

does not support the view of Rapson and Bhandarkar that it never occurs in Indian literature.<sup>4</sup> In the Persian administrative setup, the satrap was the head of the province. He used to collect taxes and control local officials and subject tribes and cities. He was also the 'supreme judge of the province to whose "chair" every civil and criminal case could be brought'. Responsibility for the safety of the roads was also vested in him and he had to 'put down brigands and rebels'. The regular army of his province and the fortresses were not, however, dependent on him and were commanded by royal officers, though he was allowed to 'have troops in his own service'. 'When the empire decayed, the satraps often enjoyed practical independence, especially as it became customary to appoint them also as generals-in-chief of their army district, contrary to the original rule'. Alexander and his successors retained the satrapal administration especially in the Seleucid empire where the satrap was generally called *strategus*.<sup>5</sup>

It has been noticed that sometimes the Sanskrit word *mahā* is added before *kṣatrapa* in Indian sources to indicate a greater position. Ordinarily, the *Kṣatrapa* became a *Mahākṣatrapa* after the death of his predecessor. This seems apparent from the fact that whereas Śoḍāsa has been described as *Kṣatrapa* in the Mathurā lion-capital inscriptions<sup>6</sup> in which his father Rājula has been described as a *Mahākṣatrapa*, in another Mathurā epigraph dated year 72,<sup>7</sup> he has been described as a

4 *Loc. cit.* See also D. R. Bhandarkar, *Foreign Elements in the Hindu Population*, Calcutta University reprint, p. 16.

5 *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. XX, 1965, p. 8. Cf. also our discussion on *Stratega* below.

6 D. C. Sircar, *Select Inscriptions bearing on Indian History and Civilization*, Vol. I, 1965, pp. 114-18.

7 *Ibid.*, p. 120.

*Mahākṣatrapa*. As the title *Mahākṣatrapa* is noticed for the first time, among the available records, in the inscriptions on the Mathurā lion-capital and on the coins of Rājula, Sten Konow believes that this higher title was introduced not long before the time of the said lion-capital.<sup>8</sup> *Mahākṣatrapa* Kharapallāna and *Kṣatrapa* Vanaspara are mentioned in the Sarnāth inscription of the Kuṣāṇa king Kanīška probably as governors of the eastern part of the latter's empire. It has been suggested that the relationship between the *Mahākṣatrapa* and the *Kṣatrapa* was 'something like that between the *Rājan* and the *Yuvarāja* ruling at the same time from the same station or from different stations'.<sup>10</sup> *Chatrapati*, the late Marāṭhī royal title, is taken as an echo of *Chatrapa*, another Prakrit form of *Kṣatrapa*.<sup>11</sup>

2. *Meridarkha*. The word mentioned in two Kharoṣṭhī inscriptions one from Swat, which applies it to one Theudora,<sup>12</sup> and another<sup>13</sup> from Taxila. The two *Meridarkhas* are mentioned as establishing Buddhist relics and sanctuaries.<sup>14</sup> The word is an Indianised form of Greek *Meridarkhes* meaning a district officer'.<sup>15</sup>

3. *Stratega*. It occurs on some copper and billon coins as a title of Aśpavarman, son of Indravarman.<sup>16</sup> The word is

8 *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, Vol. II, Part I, 1929, p. xxxiv.

9 *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. VIII, pp. 173ff.

10 *Select Inscriptions*, Vol. I, p. 114, note 2.

11 *Loc. cit.*

12 *Corps. Ins. Ind.*, Vol. II, Part I, p. 2.

13 *Ibid.*, p. 5.

14 *Ibid.*, p. xv.

15 *Ibid.*, p. 2; Raychaudhuri, *op. cit.*, p. 515.

16 R. B. Whitehead, *Catalogue of Coins in the Punjab Museum*, Lahore, 1914, pp. 130-31, 150. Aśpavarman served under Azes II and Gondophernes.

derived from Greek *strategos*,<sup>17</sup> 'a general', which often indicated an officer with much wider functions.<sup>18</sup>

4. *Gaṇjavara, Gaṇjapati and Gaṇj-ādhipati.* *Gaṇjavara* as the designation of an officer occurs in a Mathurā inscription<sup>19</sup> of the Śaka chief Śoḍāsa, in Kalhana's *Rājatarāṅgiṇī*<sup>20</sup> and in the *Lokaprakāśa* ascribed to Kṣemendra.<sup>21</sup> It is the same as Persian *Ganjwar* meaning 'a treasurer', derived from *ganj*, 'treasury'.<sup>22</sup> That *gaṇja*, an Indianised form of *ganj*, denoted a treasury is not only borne out by the *Rājatarāṅgiṇī*,<sup>23</sup> but also by Utpala's commentary on the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* (52.13) which explains it as *kośa-bhavanam* (i.e. treasury).<sup>24</sup> It is interesting to note that sometimes such Indian words as *pati*, *adhipati*, etc., are added to *gaṇja*. In the Taleswar (Almora District, U. P.) plate<sup>25</sup> of Dyutivarman who flourished about the sixth century A. D., we find reference to the *Gaṇjapati*, while the *Lokaprakāśa* refers to the *Gaṇj-ādhipati*.<sup>26</sup> *Gaṇjavara, Gaṇjapati* and *Gaṇj-ādhipati* refer to one and the same officer.

5. *Dibira or Divira and Divirapati or Divirapati.* *Dibira* or *Divira* is mentioned in the Khoh plates<sup>27</sup> of king Jayanātha of Uccakalpa, dated 496 A. D., and in the *Rājatarāṅgiṇī* which mentions it as distinct from *Kāyastha*.<sup>28</sup> On the authority of

17 Raychaudhuri, *op. cit.*, p. 515; D. C. Sircar, *Select Inscriptions, op. cit.*, pp. 113, 127.

18 *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. 21, 1965, p. 452. 'The best known is the Athenian *Strategus*, originally a military official, who, in the latter half of the 5th century B.C., became the most important state official.'

19 *Select Inscriptions, op. cit.*, p. 121.

20 *Rājatarāṅgiṇī*, V. 177.

21 *Ibid.*, trans. Stein, Vol. I, p. 210, note.

22 D. C. Sircar, *Indian Epigraphical Glossary*, Delhi, 1966, p. 122.

23 IV. 589.

24 *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XXXV, p. 95.

25 *Ibid.*, Vol. XIII, p. 115.

26 Stein, *loc. cit.*

27 *Corp. Ins. Ind.*, Vol III, p. 122.

28 VIII. 131.

the *Lokaprakāśa*, Bühler interpreted *Dibira* as a 'clerk, writer or accountant'.<sup>29</sup> The designation is itself an Indianised form of Persian *Dabīr* meaning 'a writer, a secretary'. The *Lokaprakāśa* refers to various classes of *divīras*, e. g. *gañja-divīra*, *nagara-divīra*, *grāma-divīra* and *khavāśa-divīra*,<sup>30</sup> the first three probably meaning 'the treasury accountant', 'the city accountant', 'the village accountant' respectively, while the meaning of the fourth is uncertain.\* The word *pati* is added to *Divīra* or *Divīra* not only in the Taleswar plate referred to above, but also frequently in the inscriptions of the Maitrakas of Valabhī from the latter part of the sixth century A.D.,<sup>31</sup> and in many other records.<sup>32</sup>

6. *Śarabhaṅga*, *Sarabhaṅga*, *Sarobhaṅga* and *Sarāṁgha*. Sometimes it is found that the word is spelt differently even in the records of the same king. Thus, the Nālandā copper-plate<sup>33</sup> of king Devapāla (c. 810-54 A.D.) of Bengal and Bihar spells it as *Śarabhaṅga* while the Monghyr plate<sup>34</sup> of the same king has *Sarabhaṅga*. In a tenth century epigraph<sup>35</sup> of king Vidagdha of Chamba in the Himalayas, the word is found to occur in the form *Sarobhaṅga*. The difference in the spelling of the word has been taken to suggest its foreign origin, and D. C. Sircar points out that the word is an Indian modification of Persian *Sarhang* meaning 'a commander'.<sup>36</sup> *Sarhang*,

29 *Ind. Ant.*, Vol. VI, p. 10.

30 Stein, *loc. cit.*

\*[*Khavāśa-divīra* is *Dabīr Khās*, 'Private Secretary'.—Ed.]

31 Bhandarkar's List, No. 1326; *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XXXV, p. 95.

32 Navalakhi plates of Śīlāditya I (*Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XI, pp. 178, 182); Manor plates of Vinayāditya (*ibid.*, Vol. XXVII, pp. 18, 22); cf. also Sircar, *Ind. Ep. Gloss.*, p. 99.

33 *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XVII, p. 321, text line 29.

34 *Ibid.*, Vol. XVIII, p. 306, text line 32.

35 Vogel, *Antiquities of Chamba State*, Part I, p. 166, text line 7.

36 *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XXXV, p. 96.



is derived from *sar* (Sanskrit *śiras*), 'the head', and Old Persian *hanga* (Sanskrit *saṅgha*), 'a company', in the sense of 'the head of a contingent of troops'. In the Hatun (Gilgit) inscription of the Śāhi king Paṭoladeva who flourished about the seventh century A.D., the expression is found as *sarāṅgha* in the official designation *Giligittā-sarāṅgha*, 'the chief of the army at Gilgit'. *Sarāṅgha* of the Hatun inscription has tentatively been taken to mean 'a military governor'.

The same designation is noticed in the form *Serāṅg* in Hindi and *Sāreṅg* in Bengali.<sup>37</sup> Wilson's Glossary recognises Persian *Sarhang* and Indian *Serāṅg* and explains the designation as follows : 'a commander ; but generally applied in India to the headman of a native crew whether on board a ship or boat ; also to the headman of a gang of natives attached to artillery, dragging guns, or to the army in general, as tent-pitchers and the like, or to the head of gangs of a superior order of labourers employed in public or private works, in docks, and buildings, etc.'<sup>38</sup>

7. *Tikina*. The word forms a part of the expression *pratīta-tikina* occurring in the Nālandā stone inscription of the reign of Yaśovarman (c. 725-53 A. D.), which refers to one Mālāda as the son of a *Tikina* who was the minister and frontier-officer of king Yaśovarman and the governor of the northern provinces of his kingdom.<sup>39</sup> *Tikina* has been taken as an Indianised form of Turkish *tigin*, *tegin* or *tagin* meaning 'a prince of the blood', and especially used in respect of the son or the brother of the Khān.<sup>40</sup> The Chinese rendering of the word is *t'o-k'in*. Recognised for the first time by Thomsen in the Orkhan inscriptions, several instances of its use are noticed in Chavannes' *Documents sur les Tou-kiue (Turcs)*

37 *Ibid.*, p. 97.

38 See also Hobson-Jobson, s. v. *Serang*.

39 *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XX, p. 43, text line 4.

40 *Ibid.*, p. 41.

*Occidentaux*. In the Nālandā inscription the *Tikina* has been described as *pratīta*, i.e. 'distinguished' or 'well-known'.

8. *Pilupati* or *Pilūpati* and *Mahāpilupati*, *Mahāpilūpati*, or *Mahāpalupati*. *Mahāpilupati* occurs in a large number of inscriptions.<sup>41</sup> The Madanpur plate of Śricandra mentions it as *Mahāpilūpati*,<sup>42</sup> whereas in the Saṅkheḍā grant of Śantilla, general of Nirihullaka, it occurs in the form of *Mahāpalupati*.<sup>43</sup> While *Pilupati* has been noticed in the Nagardhan plates<sup>44</sup> of Svāmīrāja (c. 570-90 A.D.), it is mentioned as *Pilupati* in the Taleswar plates of Dyuti-varman and Viṣṇuvarman.<sup>45</sup> In both the Taleswar plates, *Pilupati* and *Aśvapati* have been referred to side by side. The word *pīlu* in the designation has been taken to be the same as Arabic-Persian *fil* meaning 'an elephant' and the designation as denoting 'leader of the elephant force' or 'keeper of the elephants'.<sup>46</sup>

9. *Drammasaustha* and *Drammasustha*. The *Purātana-prabandhasaṅgraha* mentions the *Drammasaustha*<sup>47</sup> and the

41 See, besides the Nālandā spurious copper-plate inscription of Samudragupta (*Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XXV, pp. 50, 53), the Gunaighar plate (507 A.D.) of Vainyagupta (*Sel. Ins.*, *op. cit.*, p. 343), Abhona plates of Kalacuri Saṅkaragaṇa, dated 595-96 A.D. (*Ep. Ind.*, Vol. IX, p. 298), Belava plate of Bhojavarman (N. G. Majumdar, *Inscriptions of Bengal*, Vol. III, 1929, p. 21), the copper-plate grants of the Sena kings Vijayasena (*ibid.*, p. 63), Ballālasena (*ibid.*, p. 73) and Lakṣmaṇasena (*ibid.*, pp. 87, 96, 102, 111; *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XXI, p. 217; Vol. XXVI, pp. 7 and 12, note) and the Panchobh plate of Saṁgrāmagupta (*JBORS*, Vol. V, 1919, p. 588).

42 *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XXVIII, p. 57, text line 23.

43 *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 23, text line 4.

44 *Ibid.*, Vol. XXVIII, pp. 8-9.

45. Taleswar plate of Dyuti-varman (*ibid.*, Vol. XIII, p. 115, text line 5) and Taleswar plate of Viṣṇuvarman (*ibid.*, p. 119, text line 8).

46 *Inscriptions of Bengal*, Vol. III, p. 186. In the *Mahāvīyutpatti* (p. 30), where the expression occurs along with *Gajapati* and *Aśvapati*, it has, however, been explained as 'chief treasurer'.

47 Ed. Jinavijaya, p. 43.

*Prabandhakośa* the *Drammasuśtha*.<sup>48</sup> The expressions have been explained as 'well-versed in *dramma*'.<sup>49</sup> We have discussed these two designations elsewhere.<sup>50</sup>

10. *Bakanapati* or *Vakanapati*. The designation has been traced in three Mathurā inscriptions of the age of the Scytho-Kuṣāṇa kings. Sten Konow thought that Bakana or Vakana may represent the famous Wakhān, which is mentioned as Vokkāṇa in works like the *Divyāvadāna*, so that the designation would denote 'the lord of Wakhān'.<sup>51</sup> D. C. Sircar also supports Sten Konow when he regards Vakana of the Mathurā inscription of Huviska of the year 28 as the name of a place.<sup>52</sup> H. W. Bailey, however, points out that *Bakanapati* or *Vakanapati* occurs as a title of some foreign personages in all the three inscriptions. He draws attention to the fact that *pati* means not only 'lord of' but also 'official in charge of' in both the Iranian and Indian languages. He connects *bakana* or *vakana* in *Bakanapati* and *Vakanapati* with Iranian *bagana* meaning 'connected with the gods' as an adjective in *ana* from *baga*, 'god', the same as Sogdian *byn*, 'a

48 Ed. Jinavijaya, p. 49.

49 B. J. Sandesara and J. P. Thaker, *Lexicographical Studies in Jaina Sanskrit*, Baroda, 1962, p. 75. For a discussion on *dramma*, see R. C. Agrawala in *Journ. Num. Soc. Ind.*, Vol. XVII, pp. 64ff. Cf. also the author's paper, *ibid.*, Vol. XXX, pp. 96-101.

50 See *Journ. Anc. Ind. Hist.*, Vol. II pp. 94-103.

51 *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XXI, p. 60. L. Bachhofer (*JAOS*, 1941, p. 250) also accepted the suggestion. Sten Konow further opined that *Hum* following *Bakanapatina* in the Māt inscription may be connected with the old name of Wakhān represented by Chinese *Hiu-mi* or that of its capital, Chinese Ho-mo.

52 *Sel. Ins.*, *op. cit.*, p. 152, note 9. For Wakhān, see *BSOAS*, Vol. XIII, p. 402.

53 *BSOAS*, Vol. XIV, pp. 420-23.

temple', and observed that the title actually stands for 'an official in charge of temples ( or a temple )'. According to him, this meaning suits the reference to *devakula* in the first two inscriptions and would 'well apply also to the *puṇya-śālā* (hall of merit) of the third'.

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## Addenda et Corrigenda

- Page 3, line 20.—*Read*—B. P. Mazumdar
- „ „ line 31.—*Read*—L. K. Pramanik
- „ 8, line 15.—*Add Note*—The inscription has recently appeared in English in the *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. XXXVII, pp. 193ff.
- „ 22, note 43.—*Add Editorial Note*—Cf. Sircar, *The Successors of the Śātavāhanas in the Lower Deccan*, 1939, pp. 325-26 ; also *Studies in the Society and Administration of Ancient and Medieval India*, Vol. I, 1967, pp. 71-72.
- „ 35, note.—*Read*—December, 1969
- „ 39, line 11.—*Read*—alphabet
- „ 40, line 23.—*Read*—Nahapāna
- „ 41, line 14.—*Read*—Yājña-Śātakarṇi
- „ „ line 23.—*Read*—line below
- „ „ line 27.—*Read*—temporary sway
- „ 49, note 13.—*Read*—Reischauer
- „ 52, line 2.—*Read*—Uttarāpatha
- „ 73, note 2, line 1.—*Read*—*Vaiṣṇavism*, *Śaivism*
- „ 84, note.—*Add*—See below, p. 139, note 13.
- „ 89, note, line 1.—*Read*—Dinabandhu
- „ 92, note 5, line 1.—*Add Editorial Note*—The intended reading seems to be *Lakṣmīn*
- „ „ „ line 2.—*Read*—*Śilpaprakāśa*
- „ 93, line 8.—*Read*—Buddhists had
- „ 95, note 8.—*Add Editorial Note*—See below, p. 137, note 5.
- „ 110, note 18, line 5.—*Read*—*āsvādit-endu-vigalan* ;
- „ 126, note.—*Read*—November, 1969.
- „ 129, last line.—*Add Editorial Note*—*Jyeṣṭhasa* is the wrong reading for *Jyeṣṭhadattasya*. See Allan's *Cat.* (A. I.), p. 279, No. 2, and p. cl iii; Smith's *Cat.*, p. 209, Pl. XXIII. 7.
- „ 130, lines 18ff.—*Add Editorial Note*—Lakṣmī's association with cow or bull may be explained by her husband's (i.e. Kṛṣṇa-Vāsudeva's) conception as *Go-Brāhmaṇa-hita* (*Mbh.*, XII. 47.94). Cf. also Sircar, *Studies in Indian Coins*, p. 258.
- „ 130, lines 22-23 }  
 „ 131, lines 23ff } —*Add Editorial Note*—See above, p. 87, lines 27ff.



- „ 137, note 6.—*Add Editorial Note*—See above, p. 95, note 8.
- „ „ „ 7.—*Add*—The barn owl is called *Lakṣmī-peñcā* (Lakṣmī's owl), the other three kinds being *Kāl-peñcā* (hawk owl), *Kuṭure-peñcā* (spotted owl) and *Hutum peñcā* (brown fish owl). See J. M. Das, *Bāṅgālā Bhāṣār Abhidhān*, s. v. *peñcā*.
- „ 139, note 13, line 11.—*Read*—and Brahman
- „ 141, line 7,—*Read*—Madhya Pradesh<sup>20</sup>
- „ 147, line 17.—*Add Editorial Note*—Sarasvatī is not mentioned in the *Mahāummagga Jātaka*.

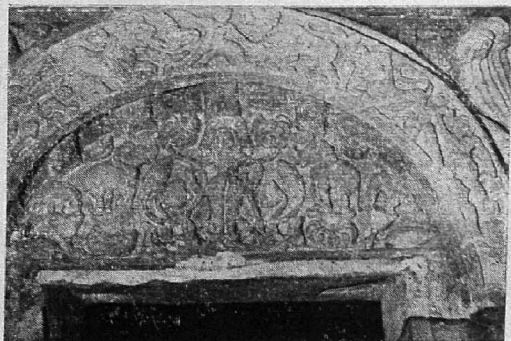


Fig. 1.—Bishnupur Terracotta Panel.

Fig. 2.—Śrī from Ananta Gumphā, Khandagiri.

PLATE II

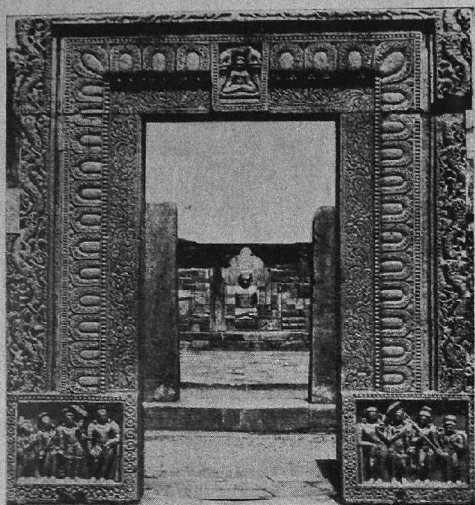


Fig.3.—Door-frame of Monastery at Ratnagiri.  
Fig. 4.—Gajalakṣmī from Jāṅpur.

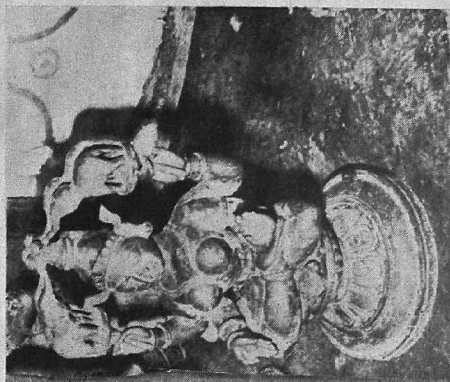


Fig. 6.—Gajalakṣmī from Garh  
Andhia (Courtesy : Sri  
Ramachandra Ratsing)



Fig. 5.—Gajalakṣmī on a Wheel from Konārak.



Fig. 7.—Lakṣmi-Nārāyaṇa, Lingarāja Temple,  
Bhubaneswar.



Fig. 8.—Lakṣmi-Janārdana, Garh Andhia (Courtesy :  
Sri Ramachandra Ratsing).

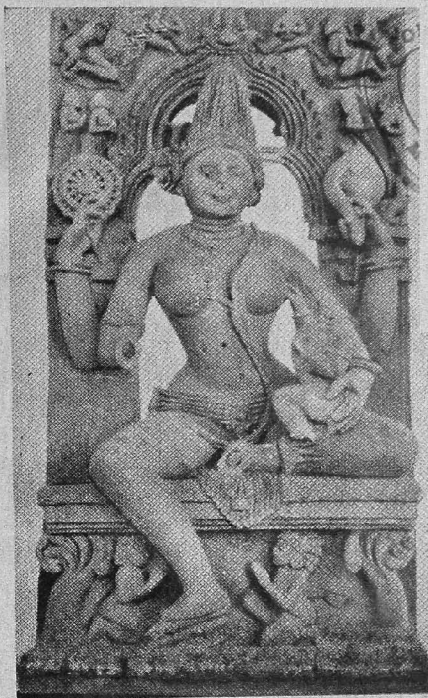
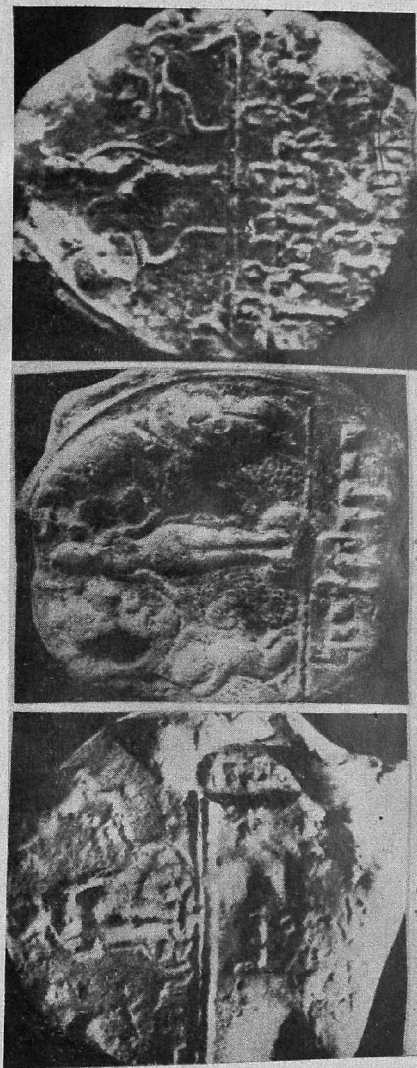


Fig. 9.—Vaiṣṇavī, Dharmaśālā (Copyright : Orissa State Museum)



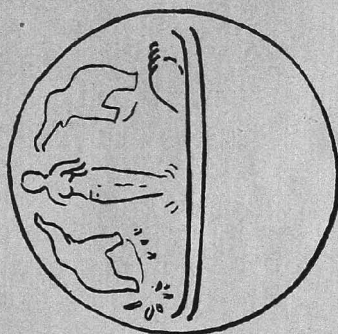
Figs. 11-19.—Gajalakṣmi on Seals.





Figs. 20-22.—Gajalakṣmī on Seals.





Figs. 23-25.—Gajalakṣmī on Seals.



Composite Bronze Image of Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa from  
Nepal, now in the Museum für Volkerkunde, Basel.  
Reproduced from *Journ. As. Soc.*, Vol. V, 1963,

